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\*Cold War rhetoric infects Yanukovich statements

### **DEEP CONTRADICTIONS CLOUD YANUKOVYCH'S FOREIGN POLICY**

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Unlike the 1994 and 1999 races, foreign policy issues have not played a central role in Ukraine's 2004 presidential campaign. The main opposition candidate, Viktor Yushchenko, has deliberately stayed away from foreign policy issues. More importantly, foreign policy issues are not a major concern for Ukrainian voters. In contrast, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich has attempted to use foreign policy issues to bring him additional votes. This strategy, though, has merely served to confuse Ukraine's foreign policy even more.

Since March 2003, Yanukovich and his team have spent \$1,041,396.50 on public relations work (*Ukrayinska pravda*, November 10). This sum was paid to six Washington, DC-based companies to improve his image as Prime Minister and presidential candidate, as well as his government's image. The data is openly available from the FARA (Foreign Agents Registration Act) registration unit. Other large amounts are being spent by Dnipropetrovsk oligarch Viktor Pinchuk, who has concentrated on bringing American VIPs to Ukraine, most recently former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Another aspect of this U.S. public relations campaign is the presence of Ukrainian troops in Iraq, where they are the fourth largest contingent. These troops' sole purpose is to improve Kuchma's image after the United States accused him of authorizing the sale of Kolchuga radars to Iraq in July 2000.

But despite these U.S.-oriented activities, neither President Leonid Kuchma nor his chosen successor, Yanukovich, are "pro-American." Rather, they are pursuing a contradictory "multi-vector" foreign policy that combines this "pro-American" lobbying with a deep hostility toward the United States and the West.

Former Defense Minister Yevhen Marchuk has described the widespread use of anti-Americanism in the Ukrainian elections as a return to a "Cold War mentality" ([bbc.co.uk/Ukrainian](http://bbc.co.uk/Ukrainian), November 10). Yushchenko concurs, saying, "There are ominous signs of neo-Soviet revival here" (*The Guardian*, October 27).

Yanukovich was represented at a November 9 National Press Club conference in Washington by Eduard Prutnyk, his adviser, and Aleksei Kiselyiov, his U.S.-based representative. When asked how they expected to improve relations with the United

States while promoting Ukraine's biggest anti-American campaign since the Brezhnev era, both men blamed other candidates and disavowed any links between the campaign and Yanukovich. Stepan Havrysh, Yanukovich's representative to the Central Election Commission has made similar arguments (*Wall Street Journal*, October 26).

A U.S. Department of State official attending the press conference reacted with disbelief. As he pointed out, the 150 tons of anti-American posters found in Kyiv by the opposition were stored in a government-owned warehouse (see EDM, October 8). Yanukovich neither tried to block their distribution around Ukraine nor condemned their defacement of U.S. national symbols and President George W. Bush.

Such duplicity runs deep in the Yanukovich camp, as seen in four ways:

First, members of the Yanukovich government are directly involved in the anti-American campaign. Minister of Education Vasyl Kremen has revived the Brezhnev-era practice of ordering teachers to make their pupils write letters to the U.S. President complaining of "U.S. interference" (*Ukrayinska pravda*, October 20). These instructions build on a Soviet-style rhetoric that denounces Western criticism of rigged elections and democratic regression as "interference" in Ukraine's domestic affairs.

Local government representatives are also involved in this anti-American campaign. Ukrayina TV, which dominates Yanukovich's home base of the Donbas, has been continually promoting Michael Moore's anti-Bush documentary *Fahrenheit 9/11* since early October. Ads state that the documentary "reveals the truth" about Bush and the way in which the U.S. "fabricates evidence" against countries in order to "bend them to its will." The U.S. is portrayed as dominated by "imperialist ambition" and is a "threat to the entire world."

Second, the government has revived Cold War spy mania. The presidential administration ordered Ukraine's media to describe international election observers as having "links to foreign special services" (*Ukrayinska pravda*, October 19). A recent Yanukovich leaflet condemned "special operations by Western special services on our territory" (*Financial Times*, October 26).

Third, anti-Americanism has been employed on the advice of Russian political "advisers" in Gleb Pavlovsky's Kyiv-based Russian Club and the presidential administration, headed by Viktor Medvedchuk. The Russian Club's financier, Maksym Kurochkin, is tied to organized crime and survived an assassination attempt on November 8.

The Russian Club published election materials on behalf of fake nationalist candidates, such as Roman Kozak, who specialized in attacking the United States and Yushchenko. Two million copies of the Russian Club's election Memorandum were distributed as part of Kozak's campaign (*Ukrayinska pravda*, November 8). Prutnyk and Havrysh's claim that the 150 tons of anti-American posters found in Kyiv are not Yanukovich's but Kozak's are true only to the extent that Kozak was always a decoy for Yanukovich.

Fourth, the use of Russian political strategists is linked to the Russianization of Ukrainian security policy. Yanukovich has come out against Ukraine's membership in the EU and NATO because it would allegedly undermine Ukraine's economy. He bluntly declared, "I am against converting Ukrainian citizens into a cheap European workforce that obtains Ukrainian wages at European prices while paying European taxes" (*Ukrayinska pravda*, October 29). A recent leaflet opposed EU membership, as it would lead to the "liquidation of our economy." NATO membership, the same leaflet argues, would mean that Ukraine would be "pulled into military adventures" (*Financial Times*, October 26).

This schizophrenic foreign policy shows how oligarchs have captured the Ukrainian state, which has the highest rate of state capture in the post-communist world. Over \$1 million spent on public relations work in the United States is aimed at lobbying against the Bush administration adopting a tougher line towards Ukraine's ruling elites, against whom sanctions have been threatened if the elections are not free and fair. Sending Ukrainian troops to Iraq is a move to improve Kuchma's image after Kolchugagate in 2002. Neither of these steps has anything to do with Ukraine's national interests.

Ukraine's return to Brezhnev-era anti-Americanism reflects the neo-Soviet political culture found within the Yanukovich camp, which has been deepened by Russia's overt intervention in the elections. This domestic campaign -- rather than the U.S.-based one -- provides the best insight into what Kuchma, Yanukovich, and Medvedchuk really think of the United States and the West.