

**EURASIA DAILY MONITOR**  
**Volume 1 Issue 91 (September 23, 2004)**

**RUSSIA AND STATE-SPONSORED TERRORISM IN UKRAINE (PART 2)**

By **Taras Kuzio**

As in many post-communist states, Ukrainian authorities control "loyal nationalist" groups. Paradoxically, although presidential front-runner Viktor Yushchenko is regularly assailed as a "nationalist," his Our Ukraine bloc has only one member that is nationalist: the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists. Yet the recent wave of terrorist attacks has been blamed on Yushchenko followers.

In contrast, Viktor Medvedchuk's Presidential Administration and the Social Democratic United Party (SDPUo) that he leads control four extreme nationalist groups. These are the Ukrainian National Assembly (UNA), the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists in Ukraine (OUNvU), Rukh for Unity (RukhZy), and Bratstvo (Brotherhood). Dmytro Korchytsky, head of Bratstvo, was a commentator on the "1+1" television channel controlled by Medvedchuk. His "Prote" television show has specialized in attacking Yushchenko.

Each of these four nationalist groups has provided a presidential candidate who is working on behalf of Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich: Korchytsky (Bratstvo), Roman Kozak (OUNvU), Andriy Chornovil (OUNvU), and Bohdan Boyko (RukhZy). These, and 12 other candidates who also work for Yanukovich, control 60% of the election officials who will be crucial should the vote be manipulated in favor of Yanukovich ([cvu.org.ua](http://cvu.org.ua)). These candidates can also use their free airtime on state television to attack Yushchenko.

The first act of terrorism linked to the current election campaign took place on August 20. Two bombs exploded in Kyiv's Troyeshchyna market, killing one and wounding tens of others, leading to large protests by those put out of work (Vecherniye esti, August 27-September 2).

One week later, the Interior Ministry (MVS) announced that it had arrested five individuals. Two of those arrested were allegedly members of the Ukrainian People's Party (a member of Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc) and one a producer at Channel Five TV, a station owned by Our Ukraine businessman Petro Poroshenko. The People's Party categorically rejected any connection to the terrorist attack ([unp-ua.org](http://unp-ua.org), August 29). Our Ukraine bloc deputy head Ihor Hryniw described this attempt at linking Yushchenko to the bombing as a "planned provocation, a manipulation of [political] technology" (Ukrayinska pravda, August 27). Hryniw was clearly referring to Russian spin-doctors working for the Presidential Administration.

The attempt to link Yushchenko to the terrorist attack was also suspicious because of its timing. The attack occurred only two days before an August 22 statement by the MVS, Security Service (SBU), and Prosecutor's Office warning the opposition to not attempt to undertake "provocations." The statement also warned that the security forces would repulse any attempt by the opposition to repeat the Georgian revolution and take power by force.

Blaming the terrorist attack on Yushchenko was disinformation, as those arrested were actually from pro-presidential nationalist groups hostile to Yushchenko. One of the actual perpetrators is a supporter of the pro-presidential nationalist Boyko, presidential candidate of the Movement of Ukrainian Patriots, a coalition that includes Rukh for Unity (RukhZy), the party that he leads. A second is a member of the Tryzub (Trident) paramilitary group (also a member of Boyko's election coalition). Meanwhile, the third was from another pro-presidential nationalist group, the Ukrainian National Assembly, who had previously been a bodyguard to Korchytsky (now head of the pro-presidential Bratstvo nationalist group).

UNA has held various demonstrations in Kyiv with participants dressed in Nazi-like fatigues and declaring their support for Yushchenko. Yushchenko has always denied any links to UNA and has called upon the MVS and Justice Ministry to de-register the party.

In mid-September a UNA attempt to hold a rally "in support of Yushchenko" was thwarted when Our Ukraine supporters blocked it and convinced the students paid to attend that it was a charade ([razom.org.ua](http://razom.org.ua), September 9). UNA vigils "in support of Yushchenko" have been widely broadcast on

television channels controlled by Medvedchuk to portray Yushchenko as an "extremist."

A second terrorist attack took place on September 3 in Kyiv. The target this time was the deputy director of the market hit on August 20. On the same day the Interior Ministry handed the investigation of the two terrorist attacks over to the SBU, reflecting its political sub-text.

These two terrorist attacks have grown out of scenarios planted in Ukraine by Russian political advisors working for the Ukrainian Presidential Administration (see EDM, September 22). They are not the first time provocations have been staged during a Ukrainian election. In the 1999 Ukrainian presidential elections a terrorist attack was undertaken against Progressive Socialist leader and candidate Natalie Vitrenko. Individuals implicated in that attack blamed it on Socialist leader and candidate Oleksandr Moroz, the main threat to incumbent Kuchma's chances of being re-elected. According to the illicit tapes made in Kuchma's office by presidential guard Mykola Melnychenko, the attack was organized by the authorities to discredit Moroz and block his entry into a runoff. Kuchma duly defeated Communist leader Petro Symonenko in round two.

In this year's elections the authorities are using more sophisticated tactics prepared by Russian political strategists close to Putin. The stakes are higher than in the 1999 elections, because Yushchenko is a far bigger threat to Yanukovych than was Moroz to Kuchma.