

EURASIA DAILY MONITOR
Volume 2, Issue 153 (August 05, 2005)

**YUSHCHENKO AND TYMOSHENKO CALL FOR CREATION OF
PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY**

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After Ukraine's parliament recessed for summer on July 8, the government issued a damning indictment of parliament and parliamentary speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn for not facilitating the passage of legislation required for Ukraine to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the fall (kmu.gov.ua, July 8). Lytvyn wanted the entire parliament to condemn the government statement, but only the Communist, Socialist, and a few centrist parties agreed. Other centrists and, not surprisingly, Our Ukraine and the Yulia Tymoshenko bloc refused to sign.

Hostility to Lytvyn unites both Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko and members of the Reform and Order (RiP) party who, in the 2002 parliamentary election, were members of President Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine bloc. These include key government ministers such as Finance Minister Viktor Pynzenyk, First Deputy Prime Minister for Humanitarian Affairs Mykola Tomenko, and Economics Minister Serhiy Teryokhin.

Reform and Order's alliance with Tymoshenko belies the view that she is a "socialist," as all three ministers advocate market-economy reforms. Other members of the government, such as Minister of Justice Roman Zvarych, have lined up behind Yushchenko by being loyal to National Security and Defense Council Secretary Petro Poroshenko, whom Tymoshenko keeps at a distance.

Since Yushchenko's election Reform and Order has drifted away from Our Ukraine and closer to Tymoshenko for four reasons.

First, Reform and Order has quarreled with Our Ukraine over who owns the "Our Ukraine" brand name. In summer 2004, the party renamed itself "Our Ukraine," thereby confusing the electorate

because there was already an Our Ukraine party (led by Pynzenyk) and an Our Ukraine parliamentary bloc (led by Yushchenko). In July the Ministry of Justice ordered the return of the Our Ukraine name from RiP to Yushchenko. The ruling occurred a few days ahead of the Our Ukraine congress.

Second, RiP sympathizes with Tymoshenko's dislike for businessmen in the Yushchenko camp, such as Poroshenko. Members fear that their continued presence will lead Ukrainian voters to eventually come to believe that "oligarchs" exist in both the Yushchenko team and the former Leonid Kuchma, now opposition, camp.

The continued presence of big businessmen in the Yushchenko camp will make it difficult to separate business and politics. Yushchenko made this distinction a major campaign issue to differentiate himself from the cozy and corrupt relationships that oligarchs had with the Kuchma administration.

Poroshenko and other businessmen around Yushchenko are also less antagonistic than Tymoshenko and Reform and Order towards former pro-Kuchma oligarchs. Poroshenko dislikes Tymoshenko's anti-oligarch populism and often tries to temper it. At the same time, Poroshenko and Yushchenko need Tymoshenko's anti-oligarch populism to attract voters in the 2006 election.

Third, Reform and Order, like other national democratic parties such as Rukh (led by Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk) and the Ukrainian People's Party (led by Yuriy Kostenko), is refusing to merge into Yushchenko's new party of power, People's Union-Our Ukraine. Instead, they are proposing that the 2002 Our Ukraine bloc of parties be reanimated. If this revival fails, the national democratic parties will join the Tymoshenko bloc, which includes Tymoshenko's Fatherland Party.

Fourth, and most importantly, Reform and Order's leaders and Tymoshenko disagree with Yushchenko and Poroshenko over the expediency of aligning with Lytvyn's People's Party of Ukraine (NPU)

in the 2006 parliamentary election. RiP government members agree with Fatherland and other parties in the Tymoshenko bloc that Lytvyn should not be part of the pro-Yushchenko 2006 election coalition.

Poroshenko and Lytvyn are close allies from the Kuchma era, when Poroshenko was a Kuchma loyalist and Lytvyn head of the presidential administration. Poroshenko only went into opposition after a parliamentary vote of no confidence dissolved Yushchenko's government in April 2001.

Tymoshenko has made two demands on Yushchenko for the 2006 election, and the president has little choice but to concede. Alone, his People's Union-Our Ukraine party can attract a maximum of only one-third of the electorate.

The first demand is that Tymoshenko remains prime minister until the 2006 election. The second demand is to exclude Lytvyn's NPU from the 2006 election coalition (see EDM, August 3).

In order to not repeat the bedlam seen in parliament in June-July and to take control over the legislature ahead of the 2006 election, Yushchenko and Tymoshenko aim to ready a pro-Yushchenko majority for when parliament reconvenes in September. At first, Lytvyn ruled out the idea, claiming it would be as ineffectual as the pro-Kuchma and pro-Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovych situational parliamentary majority after the 2002 election. But later, fearing that if he did not support, he would be marginalized, Lytvyn flip-flopped and began to support the idea.

Any parliamentary majority created without Lytvyn's support would inevitably lead to the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko coalition supporting a vote to replace him with a more agreeable speaker. Lytvyn became parliamentary speaker in May 2002 by only one vote above the required 225, a vote that was "loaned" by a dissident Communist.

But where would the proposed parliamentary majority come from?

The four factions that would support such a majority have only 155 deputies. They include Our Ukraine (77), Tymoshenko's bloc (39), Kostenko's UNP (24), and First Deputy Prime Minister Anatoliy Kinakh's Party of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (PPPU) with 15.

Our Ukraine's parliamentary leader, Mykola Martynenko, described his own faction, Tymoshenko's, and Kostenko's as "constructive parliamentary forces." He added the Socialist Party (SPU), Lytvyn's NPU, and the PPPU to this "constructive" group, but with reservations (razom.org.ua, July 14).

If the SPU (25) and Lytvyn's NPU (46) were to join the new parliamentary majority, then it would have a slim majority of only 226 deputies. Other possible members could be the former pro-Kuchma United Ukraine faction (20) and some deputies who are unaffiliated (37). But, if this were to transpire, the same criticism would be repeated; namely, that the pro-Yushchenko parliamentary majority includes, and relies upon, discredited members of the former Kuchma camp.