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[Political Corruption and Preparations for Election Fraud in Ukraine](#)



Ihor Rybakov

By Taras Kuzio

There have long been rumors and some evidence that Presidents Leonid Kuchma and Viktor Yanukovich (this practice was not used by President Viktor Yushchenko) have bought opposition deputies to encourage them to defect to pro-presidential parliamentary coalitions (see EDM, February 17). Bribes are allegedly in the form of down payments of \$1 million or more, as well as \$20-25,000 per month 'salaries.' The 'salaries' are paid when defectors vote for pro-presidential laws and resolutions.

In the Kuchma era, the number of defectors was far smaller than under Yanukovich because presidential pressure was far less and as a consequence, parliament never became Kuchma's rubber stamp institution. Under Yanukovich, the scale of political corruption has exponentially grown, the numbers of deputies who have been bribed to defect has tripled and parliament has become a de facto rubber stamp institution.

In December 2011, Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko [BYuT] parliamentary deputy Roman Zabzaliuk pretended to defect to the pro-presidential Reforms and Stability parliamentary coalition and taped the ensuing conversations with head of the pro-presidential Reforms for the Future parliamentary faction Ihor Rybakov. The Reforms for the Future faction mainly consists of 19 former opposition deputies.

The tape recordings provide evidence of political corruption, cynicism in the ruling authorities and preparations for falsification of the October 2012 parliamentary elections. The prosecutor's office has, not surprisingly, refused to investigate the corruption. Following is a translation of one part of the conversations.

Roman Zabzaliuk: Can you tell me if the starting negotiating figure is around \$500,000? Is this indeed the case?

Ihor Rybakov: Yes! Yes! Yes! The starting negotiating figure is \$500,000, ...and it is important that this is clearly understood...This is the first point. And the second point is that we should reach agreement with them as we need candidates in western Ukraine like we need (fresh) air. This is what the President of Ukraine himself...

RZ: In District Election Commissions (OVK) or as deputies?

IR: Yes, f**k, candidates for (parliamentary) deputies!... They will put pressure on BYuT and (Arseniy) Yatseniuk.

RZ: Yanukov or do you mean Yatseniuk?

IR: Yes, Yatseniuk. We need them today...the President said to me to my face at our meeting "F**k, give me as many as you can, the maximum!"

IR: We need any kind of candidates. F**k, any kind! What is most important is that they are allied to us. The (candidates) ...who have popularity in western Ukraine. It does not f**king matter where they are from. The most important point is that I control some of these slaves...We will include them in majoritarian districts... All of the power of the authorities will be used toward getting them elected, which includes oblast (councils), governors, head of the (presidential) administration, SBU (Security Service), and prosecutors office. The entire set of administrative resources. This will be so brutally undertaken that they will be f**ked over.

Source:

Ukrayinsky Tyzhden, 23 Feb 2012, p.14.

The tapes made by Roman Zabzaliuk can be listened to here at <http://tyzhden.ua/Politics/41780>.