



Taras Kuzio

## **‘Directed chaos’ part of attack on real nationalists?**

Mar 25 at 01:13 | Taras Kuzio

Taras Kuzio writes: Are the authorities stacking a deck in Yanukovych's favor?

On Dec. 28, 2010, a group of young Ukrainian nationalists posted a video on the Internet claiming credit for the beheading of a monument to Josef Stalin erected in May by the Communist Party in Zaporizhya.

Three days later, the statue was blown up. On the same evening, Molotov cocktails were thrown at the Party of Regions offices in Kyiv in an alleged attempt at an arson attack.

A previously unknown First of January Movement claimed credit for the explosion in “honor of the 102nd anniversary of [Ukrainian nationalist leader] Stepan Bandera’s birth [in 1909].” The claim was suspect for three reasons.

First, members of a real nationalist group, Tryzub, have denied involvement in the blowing up of Stalin. It would be illogical for them to behead the statue and then return to blow it up.

Second, a 102nd year is not a standard anniversary to celebrate.



*Expert examines wreckage of Stalin monument in Zaporizhya (Ukrinform)*

Third, the alleged First of January Movement stated it was the first of planned attacks on officials who “repress Ukrainian patriots;” they also threatened the “destruction of Zionists and synagogues.” The First of January Movement brought up two standard Soviet bogeymen: Bandera and nationalist anti-Semitism.

On Jan. 14, Interior Minister Anatoliy Mohyliyov warned that the opposition was planning bloodshed during the Jan. 22 anniversary of Ukrainian independence and national Unity Day. Former Minister of Defense Anatoliy Grytsenko described the statement as aimed at spreading fear.

**This is all very suspicious, and I dare to say that it raises suspicions that “directed chaos” is being used by the authorities to undermine political opposition.**

Six days later, two bombs exploded in the Donetsk town of Makiyivka. A note left at one of the sites stated: “We are fed up with this government. We want four million euros. There are bombs planted in other buildings in the town.” In October of last year, three bombs went off in Kirovohrad ahead of a planned visit by President Viktor Yanukovich.

This is all very suspicious, and I dare to say that it raises suspicions that “directed chaos” is being used by the authorities to undermine political opposition.

The public face of strength and power is also undermined by the Yanukovich administration’s evident paranoia about a possible second Orange Revolution and his personal paranoia. The head of Yanukovich’s bodyguards is a Russian citizen because he does not trust the Security Service

of Ukraine and his personal bodyguard retinue is double the number that former presidents used.

The president's paranoia is played upon by Yanukovich's close inner circle and explains the numerous pre-emptive "prophylactic" talks the SBU has undertaken with journalists, academics and politicians.

*Experts work in Makiyivka after bomb blast near a trade center on Jan. 20.*

The most intriguing case is the Stalin monument, which was first qualified as "hooliganism" when the charges were made against its beheading, an act which Tryzub (Trident) nationalists have always taken credit for. Three days after the beheading, the statue was blown up.

Three clues give rise to my suspicions of the authorities' involvement in the explosion.

The first is that the blast enabled them to change criminal charges from "hooliganism" to the more serious charge of "terrorism," which carries a greater sentence.

Arrested Tryzub members had alibis Dec. 31 and, in addition to the explosion, someone staged a second "terrorist" attack -- an arson fire on the Party of Regions. Tryzub members, found with weapons that suspiciously look planted, were arrested on Jan. 10.

A second clue happened when more weapons and explosives were found on nine Tryzub members arrested in January. The Interior Ministry claimed they confiscated an AK-47 assault rifle, a pump action rifle, two sniper rifles, three pistols, nine walkie-talkies and two grenades.

**Svoboda, like other political parties allegedly backed by oligarchs close to the authorities, is therefore what Ukrainians describe as a "controlled opposition."**

The third clue is the effect of widespread arrests and detentions of Tryzub leadership and members has on western Ukraine. The weakening of Tryzub leaves the field open for another nationalist organization Svoboda (Freedom), which won October 2010 local elections in three Galician oblasts.

Svoboda has long been dogged by claims that it was originally funded by oligarch Igor Kolomoisky and is supported by First Deputy Prime Ministers Borys Kolesnikov and Andriy Klyuyev.

Another competitor to Svoboda, Yulia Tymoshenko's Batkivshchyna (Fatherland), is also under pressure and was unable to put up candidates in Lviv and Kyiv in the October local elections. Tymoshenko is charged with diverting funds raised under the Kyoto Protocol to the pension fund.

If she receives either a prison sentence or suspended sentence, her criminal record will prevent her from running for parliament next year and for president in 2015.

Svoboda, like other political parties allegedly backed by oligarchs close to the authorities, is therefore what Ukrainians describe as a "controlled opposition."

Svoboda has already begun working with the Party of Regions in the Lviv city council, where they voted to remove the tax-free exemption from the city's private Catholic University.

Some Ukrainian experts have claimed that the ultimate aim of the strategy of "directed chaos" is to ensure Svoboda leader Oleh Tiahnybok enters the second round of the 2015 elections with incumbent Yanukovych, where he would play the same role as Communist Party leader Petro Symonenko, who faced Leonid Kuchma in the 1999 presidential elections.

In 2015, Ukrainian voters would therefore, as in 1999, vote against Tiahnybok as they voted against Symonenko, thereby ensuring second terms for Kuchma and Yanukovych despite their low popularity.

The arrests and detentions of 15 Tryzub members have been plagued by illegalities.

**If a monument to Adolf Hitler was put up in Germany, anybody beheading it would be national heroes.**

"If the authorities act with such bandit methods with us then tomorrow it could be applied to everybody," Olesia Prymenko, deputy leader of Womens Sich, a member organization of Tryzub, warned.

Incarcerated Tryzub members have complained about being denied access to lawyers, some of whom were threatened for defending the activists, confiscation of cell phones, denial of food and water, toiletry hygiene and clothes. Worse still, the arrested activists have allegedly been subjected to interrogation methods that can be described as "torture," such as psychological threats.

If a monument to Adolf Hitler was put up in Germany, anybody beheading it would be national heroes. In Ukraine, where a 2006 law classifies the 1933 Holodomor that Stalin unleashed as "genocide," charges of "hooliganism" for the beheading of Stalin have been reclassified as "terrorism" through a strategy of "directed chaos" that seeks to maintain the current leaders in power indefinitely.

*Taras Kuzio is Austrian Marshall Plan Foundation visiting fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C. He has just completed a contemporary history of Ukraine.*

Web links to Kyiv Post material are allowed provided that they contain a URL hyperlink to the [www.kyivpost.com](http://www.kyivpost.com) material and a maximum 500-character extract of the story. Otherwise, all materials contained on this site are protected by copyright law and may not be reproduced without the prior written permission of Public Media at [news@kyivpost.com](mailto:news@kyivpost.com)

All information of the Interfax-Ukraine news agency placed on this web site is designed for internal use only. Its reproduction or distribution in any form is prohibited without a written permission of Interfax-Ukraine.

