

OKLAHOMA WORKERS' MONTHLY

News for
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MARCH 2014

Labor Conquers All

Volume 3, Issue 3

Ukrainian Ultra-Rightists Given Major Cabinet Posts in Government

Reprinted from *People's World*

Edited for length by *Oklahoma Workers' Monthly*

By Greg Rose

The ultra-right Svoboda Party has scored six major cabinet ministries in the government of Arseniy Yatsenyuk approved by the Ukrainian parliament on Thursday, February 27. Svoboda is an ultra-right, anti-Semitic, Russophobic party with its base of support in western Ukraine.

The most important post was claimed by a co-founder of Svoboda, Andriy Parubiy. He was named Secretary of the Security and National Defense Committee, which supervises the defense ministry and the armed forces.

The Parubiy appointment to such an important post should, alone, be cause for international outrage. He led the masked Svoboda and Right Sector thugs who battled riot police in Kiev.

The Right Sector is an openly fascist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Russian organization. Most of the snipers and bomb throwers in the crowds were connected with this group.

Right Sector members have been participating in military training camps for the last two years or more in preparation for street activity of the kind witnessed in the Ukraine over the last few months.

The Right Sector, as can be seen by the appointment of Parubiy, is now in a position to control major appointments to the provisional government and has succeeded in achieving its long time goal of legalizing discrimination against Russians. The new parliament has passed legislation that declares Russian speakers no longer have equal rights with Ukrainians. Svoboda and the Right Sector, as can be seen by the appointment of Parubiy, are now in a position to control major appointments to the provisional government and have succeeded in achieving their long-time goal of legalizing discrimination against Russians.

Parubiy is also associated with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk's Fatherland Party. Dmytro Yarosh, leader of the Right Sector delegation in parliament, was named Parubiy's deputy. These appointments of open fascists to control of the armed forces are particularly alarming.

Oleksandr Sych, a Svoboda parliamentarian from Ivano-Frankivsk best known for his attempts to ban all abortions in Ukraine, including those resulting from rape, was named deputy prime minister for economic affairs. Svoboda was also rewarded with the Education Ministry under Serhiy Kvit, as well as the Ecology Ministry and the Agriculture Ministry under Andriy Makhnyk and Ihor Shvaiko, respectively.

Earlier in the week Svoboda member of parliament Oleh Makhnitsky was named prosecutor-general of Ukraine.

Others with ultra-right associations with the Ukrainian National Assembly - Ukrainian National Self Defense (UNA-UNSO) also received cabinet posts. Tetyana Chernovol, portrayed in the Western press as a crusading investigative journalist without reference to her past involvement in the anti-Semitic UNA-UNSO, was named chair of the government's anti-corruption committee. Dmytro Bulatov, known for his alleged kidnapping by police, but also with UNA-UNSO connections, was appointed minister of youth and sports.

Yatsenyuk's Fatherland Party, and figures close to it, obtained 10 cabinet posts, including deputy prime minister for EU integration, interior, justice, energy, infrastructure, defense, culture, social issues, and a minister without portfolio. Yegor Sobolev, leader of a civic group who is politically close to Yatsenyuk, was appointed chair of the Lustration Committee, charged with purging followers of President Yanukovich from government and public life.

In a society where oligarchs play such an important political and economic role it is unsurprising that Volodymyr Groysman, mayor of Vinnytsa and close associate of oligarch Petro Poroshenko, was chosen as deputy prime minister for regional affairs. Groysman was also close to former President Viktor Yushchenko. The new finance minister, Oleksander Shlapak, is a representative of oligarch Ihor Kolomoyskiy, the second wealthiest man in the Ukraine.

The remaining cabinet posts went to technocrats, a doctor who organized medical services for the Maidan protestors, and a retired police general.

Notably, the interim cabinet matches exactly the government that U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland recommended in her intercepted call with the U.S. ambassador in Kiev, in which she revealed the U.S. plan for a coup in Ukraine.

Vitali Klitschko and his UDAR party are excluded, likely because of their close relationship with German chancellor Angela Merkel. Yatsenyuk's Fatherland Party receives the majority of portfolios. And as Nuland demanded, so long as Svoboda leader Oleh Tyahnybok did not receive a major cabinet post, Svoboda could receive several ministries.

In the eyes of many these facts are indicative of U.S. involvement in what has essentially been a coup d'état.

Ukraine and How the West Treats Comparable Events in Satellite and Non-Satellite Countries Differently

Reprinted from *what's left*

By Stephen Gowans

The uprising in Ukraine represents a struggle between the West and Russia to integrate Ukraine economically, and, ultimately, militarily, into their respective orbits. I take no side in the struggle. All the same, each side wants me, and you, to take sides. Since I live in the West, and have greater exposure to the pronouncements of people of state in the West, and to the Western mass media than I do to their Russian counterparts, I'll concentrate herein on analyzing Western efforts to shape public opinion to support the Western side of the struggle.

First, a few points by way of background:

- Ukraine is divided nationally between ethnic Ukrainians, who are concentrated in the West, and Russians, who are concentrated in the East, and especially in Crimea. Russians in Crimea and the East lean toward integration with Russia, while ethnic Ukrainians in the West tend to resent Russia's historical domination of Ukraine.
- Crimea, a peninsula jutting into the Black Sea, is the home to the Russian Black Sea ...

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... fleet. The current president, Yanukovich, extended the Russian lease on the naval base.

- Russian gas bound for Europe transits Ukraine.
- Russia does not want Ukraine to be integrated into NATO, which it views, for sound reasons, as an anti-Russian military alliance.

For the West, integration of Ukraine into its orbit means:

- Expansion of Western business opportunities.
- Growing isolation of Russia, one of the few countries strong enough to challenge U.S. hegemony.
- Influence over transit of Russian gas exports to Europe.
- Military strategic advantage.

It's instructive to contrast the treatment by Western states and mass media of the uprising in Ukraine with the concurrent uprisings in Egypt (which the West opposes) and Syria (which it supports.)

The Syrian uprising, contrary to its depiction by Western forces as a battle for democracy, is the latest, and most violent, eruption of an ongoing Islamist insurgency dating back to the 1960s and the Muslim Brotherhood's efforts to oust the "infidel" non-sectarian Arab nationalist government. The insurgency has since mutated into one dominated by salafist, takfiri, and al-Qaeda-aligned fighters backed by hereditary Muslim tyrannies, the Qatari and Saudi royal dictatorships, and former colonial powers, Turkey, France and Britain. The Western narrative makes obligatory references to the Syrian government as a "regime", complains about its authoritarian nature, insists the insurgency springs from the peaceful protests of pro-democracy activists, and celebrates the "moderate" rebels. The moderate rebels are, in the main, Muslim Brothers. To be sure, they're moderate compared to the Nusra Front and Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, but they're not the secular liberal- or social-democrats so many in the West would like to believe they are.

In contrast, the uprising in Egypt against a military dictatorship that ousted an elected Muslim Brother as president is treated very differently. The dictatorship is not called a "dictatorship", nor even a "regime", but neutrally, a "military government." The Muslim Brothers, who have taken to the streets in protest at the coup, and have been gunned down and locked up for their troubles, are not called "pro-democracy activists", as the Muslim Brothers in Syria are, or even moderate rebels, but an "emerging Islamist insurgency." Nor is the dictatorship which shot them down and locked them up called a "brutal" dictatorship. The Egyptian dictatorship calls the insurgents "terrorists", which is dispassionately noted in Western news reports, while the Assad government's depictions of Syrian insurgents who set off car bombs in crowded downtown streets as terrorists is dismissed as patent propaganda. Egypt's military dictatorship has banned political parties, tossed political opponents in jail on trumped up charges, and arrested journalists. Over one weekend the Egyptian military killed somewhere between 50 and 60 demonstrators. This is mechanically documented in major Western newspapers. There are no calls for Western intervention.

The recent events in Ukraine are treated very differently. The deaths of a few rioters in Ukraine sparks fevered media coverage and denunciation in Western capitals, while the president's attempts to quell the disorder by invoking laws restricting civil liberties is treated as a major assault on human rights. Compare that to the relative silence over the deaths of many more demonstrators in Egypt and the suspension of all political liberties in that country. If we should be exercised by the state of affairs in Ukraine, surely we should be incensed on a far

grand scale by the state of affairs in Egypt.

Foreign governments stand in relation to the West as satellites, in which case they're called allies, or non-satellites, in which case they're "enemies", or, if they're large enough, "rivals". Comparable events in any two countries will be treated in Western mass media differently and using different language depending on whether the country is a satellite (ally) or non-satellite (enemy or rival). Hence, in Syria (a non-satellite) an elected government (elected, to be sure, under restrictive conditions) is called a "regime" headed by a "dictator", while in Egypt (a satellite) a military-appointed government is not called a "regime" but a "government" and the de facto head of state (a dictator) is simply called "the head of the military." In Egypt, an emerging insurgency led by Muslim Brothers and Islamist fanatics is called "an emerging Islamist insurgency", but in Syria, an insurgency reignited by Muslim Brothers and now dominated by Islamist fanatics is called a "rebellion against dictatorship." In Ukraine (a non-satellite so far as the government goes ahead with plans to align itself with Russia and not the EU) a crackdown on dissent which is mild compared to the crackdown in Egypt (or Bahrain or Saudi Arabia or any other Gulf monarchy satellite of the United States) is treated as a major transgression on human rights, one warranting some form of Western intervention. However, no intervention is called for to stay the hand of Egypt's military. Through the deft use of language and selective emphasis and silence, Western states concoct and spread through the mass media an understanding of events in far off places that comport with the pursuit of their own interests (which, more narrowly, once you parse them out, are the interests of their wealthiest citizens as a class).

Efforts to integrate Ukraine into the EU are motivated by the desire of Western states to secure advantages for their economic elite, while efforts to integrate Ukraine into Russia are aimed at garnering benefits for Russian enterprises and investors. The interests of the bulk of Ukrainians do not, however, enter into the equation. Their role is simply to produce wealth for investors—Russian or Western or both—while doing so for as little compensation in wages, salary, benefits and government services as possible to allow the investors to make off with as much as possible. The interests of the bulk of Ukraine's citizens lie, neither with the EU nor Russian elites, but with themselves.

Opinion: Be Who You Are By Comrade Orson

About twenty years ago, a local prominent Democratic Party-oriented activist was telling me that as a socialist, I should struggle for human rights politics through the Democrats. She said that, secretly, she too was a socialist, but that calling yourself a socialist in the United States was political suicide, and therefore that I shouldn't do so if I wanted to be effective. My essential word to her was (and is) that the Democratic Party is ruled by the bourgeoisie, not its rank and file members, and it therefore rules against the interests of the proletariat. I said that it's a deceptive tool against the proletariat's ability to represent its own best interests in a democratic way, as the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie goes on exploiting, depriving, and oppressing all the while. I told her that the most effective thing that Americans could (can) do is to ditch the two party system, and instead form parties for socialism powered by mass membership.

Now twenty years have passed. The evidence in support of my position has multiplied tenfold, while, if we judge it by its performance and not by its dishonest promises, her argument for support of the Democratic Party has only weakened. The astounding thing is that even with Obama's spectacularly fascist performance, she and so many otherwise intelligent people go on beating that dead donkey-horse, flailing away its flesh, only to then pound away in the dust and bones like mad zombies. Why are they doing this, instead of becoming the **out** socialists that they really are? And why do they go on when the futility of their loyal faith to that party is so painfully evident? Descriptive terms like "cognitive dissonance" come to mind, and that's being nice about it! I do respect these people. They are smart. They are kind, but... Man! What the f*** is going on in their heads?! Come on, you guys. You've thrown away twenty years! Look at the ongoing result of your error. Be who you are now.

OKLAHOMA WORKERS' MONTHLY
www.okworkersmonthly.blogspot.com



is produced by the
Communist Party of Oklahoma
<http://www.cpok.us>
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Lawton, OK 73506-2020