

In today's Vatnik Soup, I'll introduce a former Ukrainian politician and president, Viktor Yanukovych. He's best known for selling his country to Russia, trying to turn it into an authoritarian state, and eventually fleeing to Moscow once his plan failed.

1/22



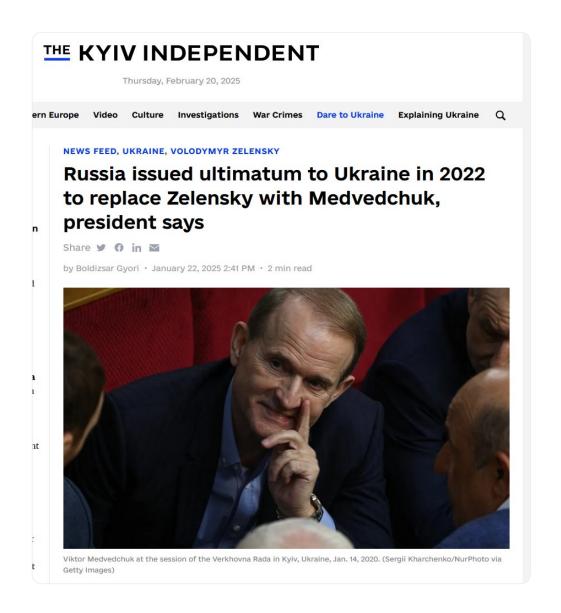
Now that Russia and the US are planning to replace president Zelenskyy with someone who's more willing to sell the country to them (most probably Viktor Medvedchuk or one of his cronies), it's a good time to remind people how Yanukovych and Putin almost took over Ukraine.



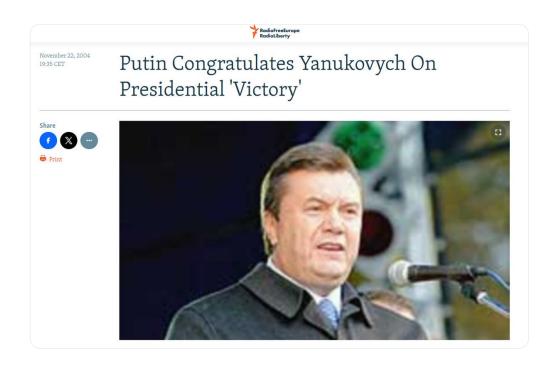
Think of it, a modestly successful comedian, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, talked the United States of America into spending \$350 Billion Dollars, to go into a War that couldn't be won, that never had to start, but a War that he, without the U.S. and "TRUMP," will never be able to settle. The United States has spent \$200 Billion Dollars more than Europe, and Europe's money is guaranteed, while the United States will get nothing back. Why didn't Sleepy Joe Biden demand Equalization, in that this War is far more important to Europe than it is to us — We have a big, beautiful Ocean as separation. On top of this, Zelenskyy admits that half of the money we sent him is "MISSING." He refuses to have Elections, is very low in Ukrainian Polls, and the only thing he was good at was playing Biden "like a fiddle." A Dictator without Elections, Zelenskyy better move fast or he is not going to have a Country left. In the meantime, we are successfully negotiating an end to the War with Russia, something all admit only "TRUMP," and the Trump Administration, can do. Biden never tried, Europe has failed to bring Peace, and Zelenskyy probably wants to keep the "gravy train" going. I love Ukraine, but Zelenskyy has done a terrible job, his Country is shattered, and MILLIONS have unnecessarily died - And so it continues.....

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Feb 19, 2025, 5:47 PM



Yanukovych's first attempt at power came in 2004, when he "won" the Ukrainian presidential election through massive fraud. The rigged vote sparked the Orange Revolution, a wave of protests that forced the election to be re-run. His opponent, pro-Western candidate...





...Viktor Yushchenko, ultimately won. Yushchenko was poisoned with dioxin, a highly toxic chemical. His face became disfigured almost overnight. The timing was suspicious, as he was leading in the polls, and many suspect that Putin was behind the attack.

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Russia was likely behind poisoning of former Ukrainian President Yushchenko in 2004 – US intelligence

ROMAN PETRENKO — SATURDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2024, 14:12











The United States intelligence has declassified a document on the assassinations abroad of political opponents of Russian leader Vladimir Putin.



After this, Yanukovych retreated from the spotlight for a while, but eventually made a political comeback. With support from Trump associates like Paul Manafort, he rebranded himself as a "moderate", and, in 2010, narrowly won the presidency in a relatively fair election.



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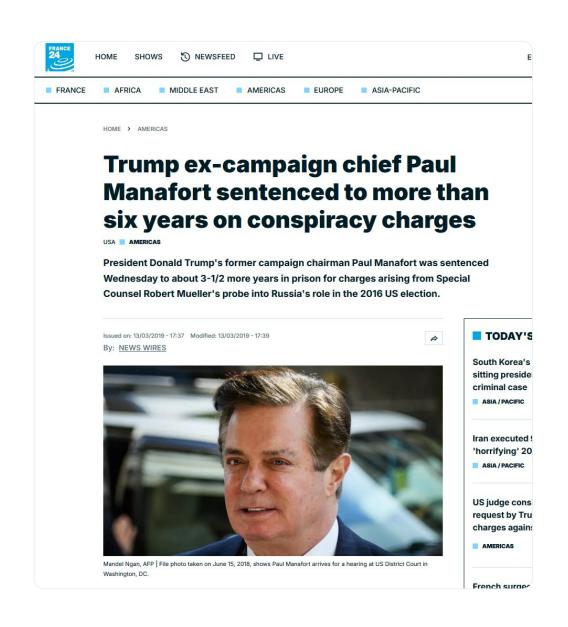
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Viktor Yanukovich wins first round of Ukraine election

Villain of 2004 Orange Revolution will face Yulia Tymoshenko in presidential run-off, while incumbent Yushchenko is wiped out



🗖 Viktor Yanukovych at a rally. Photograph: Andriy Mosienko/AP







Initially, Yanukovych was promoting economic modernisation & greater economic ties with the EU, but throughout the years he started shifting more towards authoritarianism. Recently, we saw the same happen in Georgia with Bidzina Ivanishvili & his Georgian Dream party.



November 22, 2010

By Theodor Alexe

EU, Ukraine Agree On 'Road Map' For Visa-Free Travel



 $\label{thm:composition} \mbox{European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso (right) and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy (left) welcome Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych to Brussels.$

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Ukraine election 'reversed democracy', OSCE says

① 29 October 2012





President Yanukovych's party appears to be heading for a majority

International observers say Ukraine's election has been a backward step for democracy, marred by "the abuse of power and the excessive role of money".



Founding Declaration of the Political Coalition Georgian Dream

/ 21 Feb.'12 / 15:13



Unofficial translation

2012 parliamentary election will mark being at an important crossroads for our country – establishment of a genuine multi-party democracy should launch after these elections. This is a choice between freedom and dictatorship; justice and injustice; Euro-Atlantic integration and international isolation. Victory of the Georgian people over politically and morally bankrupt ruling regime, which is today only struggling to maintain its power, is necessary in the 2012 parliamentary elections in order for Georgia to survive and establish itself as a modern democracy.

The coalition Georgian Dream has been established just for that victory. The coalition unites political forces, which are united based on the principles of freedom and democracy and express goals of society's majority.

After coming into power through expression of people's free will the Georgian Dream will:

- 1. end authoritarian rule and messianic politics in Georgia, for which it will develop institutions based on liberal-democratic values, overcome the legacy of civil confrontation and strengthen the national accord.
- 2. establish a balanced model of government branches, a genuine selfgovernance and a multi-party political system, for which it will implement a constitution reform through active participation of the public
- 3. ensure strengthening of the country's security and regional positions, for which it will deepen integration with the European Union and NATO and participate in economic and peacekeeping processes of regional scale.
- 4. start and make the country's reunification process irreversible, for which it will find the ways for dialogue with Abkhazians and Ossetians and will achieve concrete results in negotiations with Russia with the support of the international community;
- 5. establish electoral democracy; a tradition of accountability and change of government through elections, for which it will strengthen the opposition's role in the process of governance; protect media freedoms and encourage civil initiatives;

It is possible, that this strategy of luring in the voters with pro-EU and pro-Western sentiments and then turning towards Moscow originates from the Russian intelligence agencies, who are masters at deception and political maneuvering.

Russia creates long-term psychological operations in US and **Europe - NYT**

UKRAINSKA PRAVDA - FRIDAY, 25 AUGUST 2023, 21:48











Russian secret services have been using special methods of influence to conceal the Kremlin's involvement in promoting pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian narratives in the United States and Europe.

After some time, Yanukovych began reversing Ukraine's pro-European course. He cracked down on opposition, imprisoned his main rival Yulia Tymoshenko, and handed key sectors of Ukraine's economy to his inner circle, including his dentist son Oleksandr.



© 11 October 2011 · ₱91 Comments





David Stern in Kiev says the verdict has been criticised by the EU and Russia

Former Ukraine leader Yulia Tymoshenko has been jailed for seven years.

A judge ruled the ex-prime minister had criminally exceeded her powers when she signed a gas deal with Russia in 2009.

In February 2010, when he was elected, Viktor Yanukovych enjoyed support from most of the big businessmen. He quickly formed a cabinet that represented - by my count - nine different enterprise groups. But through a rapid series of governmental changes he reduced this number to two by December 2013.

At present, the government - and increasingly the economy - is dominated by a group of young businessmen who are friends with Mr Yanukovych's eldest son Oleksandr, 40. They are widely known as the Yanukovych "family".

However, who owns what is not exactly clear, and it is possible that in fact much of the wealth might belong to Mr Yanukovych's real family.

These young businessmen from Donetsk, Mr Yanukovych's eastern home region, hold all the key economic positions in the government as well as the powerful post of interior minister.

Mr Yanukovych has used a salami tactic against the tycoons.

Young businessmen or corporate raiders buy out their enterprises one after the other. These sales have been described as not very voluntary, given that the "family" controls law enforcement, courts and the tax authorities.

They have expanded in traditional heavy industry, media, and banking. Hardly any big businessman now dares to oppose Mr Yanukovych any longer. Most try to be neutral.

Many of these associates had personal connections to Yanukovych's elder son Oleksandr, who was at the center of the Family. Before his father's presidency, Oleksandr Yanukovych worked as a dentist, but by 2013 he had assembled an array of business interests and had accumulated an estimated personal fortune of \$133 million.

The Family's business interests spread far and wide, from oil and gas to prime real estate in the capital. Land for these real estate projects was often annexed from public parks and green zones, and even a public school in one case. According to media reports, armies of lawyers, phony firms and complex networks of offshore companies were used to service this business empire.

One person in this group stood out: Serhiy Kurchenko. He was 28 in 2013, when the Family's business practices started coming under scrutiny from investigative journalists. After Yanukovych gained power, Kurchenko became known as a wunderkind financial genius.

He later was referred to as "Yanukovych's wallet."

Kurchenko had an array of fictitious firms registered in flats in Kharkiv and Simferopol, whose residents had no idea they were company directors. They were linked, through financial transactions, to numerous offshore firms that churned millions of dollars for Kurchenko's corporations.

By 2013, Ukraine was on the verge of signing an Association Agreement with the EU. But at the last minute, under pressure from Moscow, Yanukovych abandoned the deal in favor of a 15 billion USD bailout from Putin, prioritizing his own power over Ukraine's future.

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ANALYSES | 2013-11-27



Ukraine withdraws from signing the Association Agreement in Vilnius: The motives and implications

Wojciech Konończuk

On 21 November, the Ukrainian government announced its decision to suspend its preparations for signing the Association Agreement with the EU. According to media reports, President Viktor Yanukovych had already informed Štefan Füle, the EU Commissioner for Enlargement, of the decision two days earlier. In its statement, the Ukrainian government said the decision had been taken for 'reasons of national security', as well as the need to improve its declining trade with Russia and other CIS countries. At the same time, Kyiv suggested the creation of a tripartite commission of Ukraine, the EU and Russia, which would work to remove barriers in mutual economic cooperation and trade liberalisation. The government also announced a return to dialogue with the Customs Union. The Ukrainian government's withdrawal from signing the agreement with the EU has sparked the biggest public protests since 2004.

Ukraine's decision is not unexpected. Since at least the beginning of November, statements by the Ukrainian government have contained clear signs that Kyiv might opt out of signing the Association Agreement on the eve of the summit in Vilnius. The turnaround in Kyiv's cooperation with the EU results from the domestic situation, as well as increasing pressure from Russia in recent months. In the context of the upcoming presidential elections in early 2015, where victory is a priority for Ukraine's ruling elite, President Viktor Yanukovych's most important task is to stabilise the increasingly difficult economic situation. To this end, it is necessary to ensure Ukrainian goods' continued access to the Russian market, and to guarantee external financial support. The Ukrainian government is hoping that, in exchange for the postponement of its rapprochement with the EU, it will manage to come to an agreement with Russia on the issue of a stabilising loan and renegotiating the gas contract. A comprehensive Russian-Ukrainian agreement could be reached in the coming months, but its conditions are likely to be unfavourable for Kyiv. The turnaround in relations between Ukraine and the EU undermines Ukraine's negotiating position with Russia, and will result in the further destabilisation of the domestic political situation.

Ukraine

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Vladimir Putin offers Ukraine financial incentives to stick with Russia

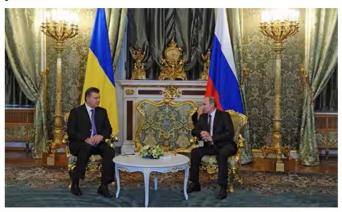
Moscow to buy \$15bn of Ukrainian government bonds and cut gas price after Kiev resists signing EU deal amid mass protests

Shaun Walker in Moscow and agencies

Wed 18 Dec 2013 10.40 CET







🗖 Russia's President Vladimir Putin (right) speaks with his Ukrainian counterpart, Viktor Yanukovych, at the Kremlin in Moscow. Photograph: Mikhail Klimentyev/AFP/Getty Images

Ukraine's EU trade deal will be catastrophic, says Russia

Kremlin claims neighbouring state faces financial ruin and possible collapse if integration agreement goes ahead



➡ The Ukrainian president, Viktor Yanukovych, and commissioner for enlargement and European neighbourhood policy, Stefan Fule, shake hands. Photograph: Andrei Mosienko/AFP/Getty Images

Shaun Walker in Yalta

Sun 22 Sep 2013 14.23 BST

22 Sept 2013





The Kremlin has warned <u>Ukraine</u> that if the country goes ahead with a planned agreement on free trade with the EU, it faces inevitable financial catastrophe and possibly the collapse of the state.

Russia is making a last-minute push to derail the integration agreement, which is due to be signed in late November. Instead, Moscow wants to lure its neighbour into its own alliance, a customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan that critics have referred to as a reincarnation of the Soviet Union. Russia has made it clear that Ukraine has to choose between the two options and cannot sign both agreements.

The Kremlin aide added that the political and social cost of EU integration could also be high, and allowed for the possibility of separatist movements springing up in the Russian-speaking east and south of Ukraine. He suggested that if Ukraine signed the agreement, Russia would consider the bilateral treaty that delineates the countries' borders to be void.

"We don't want to use any kind of blackmail. This is a question for the Ukrainian people," said Glazyev. "But legally, signing this agreement about association with EU, the Ukrainian government violates the treaty on strategic partnership and friendship with Russia." When this happened, he said, Russia could no longer guarantee Ukraine's status as a state and could possibly intervene if pro-Russian regions of the country appealed directly to Moscow.

22 Sept 2013

"Signing this treaty will lead to political and social unrest," said the Kremlin aide. "The living standard will decline dramatically ... there will be chaos."

Ukraine's cabinet of ministers signed the agreement last week, and the choice for European integration is about the only thing that all major Ukrainian politicians agree on. However, European leaders have frequently said in the past that they will only sign if President Viktor Yanukovych orders the release of Yulia Tymoshenko, the former prime minister jailed for seven years in 2011 on charges of abuse of office, which most observers believe to be politically motivated. She is currently under armed guard in a hospital, being treated for back problems.

This betrayal sparked mass protests known as Euromaidan or Revolution of Dignity. Ukrainians took to the streets, demanding European integration, democracy, and an end to corruption. Yanukovych responded with police crackdowns, kidnappings, and torture of protesters.



By early 2014, the situation escalated. On Yanukovych's orders, riot police and snipers opened fire on unarmed protesters, killing over 100 people. Instead of crushing the uprising, this massacre only fueled nationwide outrage. Russian propaganda framed it as a "coup"...

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World

Ukraine: Viktor Yanukovych accused of hiring killers to undermine protests

Ukraine points finger at ex-president, Russia in deaths as government pressured to name killers

Thomson Reuters · Posted: Apr 03, 2014 4:50 AM EDT | Last Updated: April 3, 2014



Ousted Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych says the annexation of Crimea was a tragedy and he would have done everything possible to prevent it, had he remained in power. (Ivan Sekretarev/The Associated Press)

... and blamed the CIA. As protests intensified, Yanukovych's allies abandoned him. By 22 Feb 2014, he fled Kyiv in the dead of night, escaping first to eastern Ukraine, then to Russia. Parliament officially removed him from office, and new elections were called.



Yanukovych Fled Ukraine With Only 'Hand Luggage'









Putin: Russia helped Yanukovych to flee Ukraine

① 24 October 2014





Ukraine's pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovych (left) was ousted in February

Russia helped ousted Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovych to flee from violent protests in February, Russian leader Vladimir Putin has said.





After his escape, Ukrainians discovered the scale of his corruption. His Mezhyhirya mansion was filled with expensive shit like golden toilets, private zoos, and a floating restaurant, and it quickly became a symbol of the obscene wealth he stole while in power.

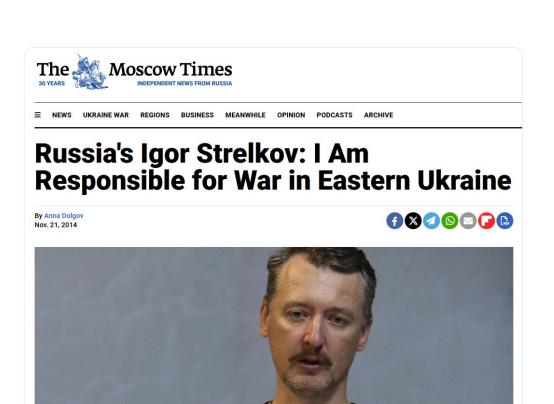








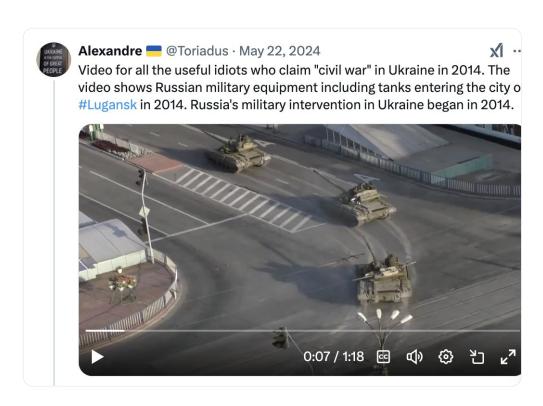
Yanukovych's downfall set off a chain reaction. With his puppet removed, Putin launched a military aggression against Ukraine, illegally annexing Crimea and fueling separatist uprisings in Donbas, Kharkiv and Odesa. Yanukovych, meanwhile, fully aligned himself with Moscow.







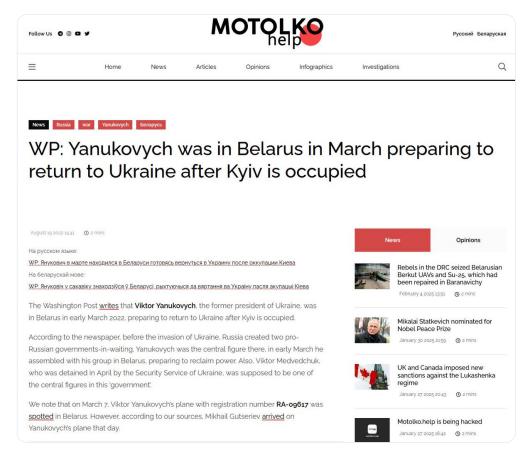




In 2014, a letter surfaced where Yanukovych begged Putin to send Russian troops to Ukraine due to it being on the "brink of a civil war", giving the Kremlin a pretext for its invasion. This document became key evidence in his later treason trial.



Despite his irrelevance, Yanukovych remains a Kremlin tool. In 2022, reports emerged that Russia considered him as a potential puppet leader for Ukraine once Kyiv fell. But Putin's plot failed, and these plans were quickly foiled.



In 2019, Yanukovych was sentenced in absentia to 13 years for treason. Today, he hides in Russia, still trying to rewrite history and justify his betrayal of Ukraine. His son is still running coal companies in Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine.



eventually toppled his government.





Today, Ukraine faces a similar threat. Trump is criticizing Zelenskyy for "not holding elections", while his close associates are simultaneously pushing for the reinstatement of Medvedchuk's media licenses. This would result in much more Russian propaganda in Ukraine.



Thursday, February 20, 2025

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Dare to Ukraine

Explaining Ukraine



NEWS FEED, VIKTOR MEDVEDCHUK, RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA, DISINFORMATION, UKRAINE, FUROPE

Russian propaganda sought to cast Medvedchuk as Zelensky's replacement, WP reports

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by Martin Fornusek · June 3, 2024 4:03 PM · 2 min read



Former Ukrainian lawmaker Viktor Medvedchuk, who later left for Russia as part of a prisoner swap, is seen in Kyiv's Appeal Court during a hearing on May 21, 2021, that ought to decide on his house arrest under treason suspicion. The lawmaker, who counts Russian President Vladimir Putin among his personal friends, said the charges against him were politically motivated and punishment for his stance. (/Sergei Supinsky/AFP via Getty Images)



AMERICAS

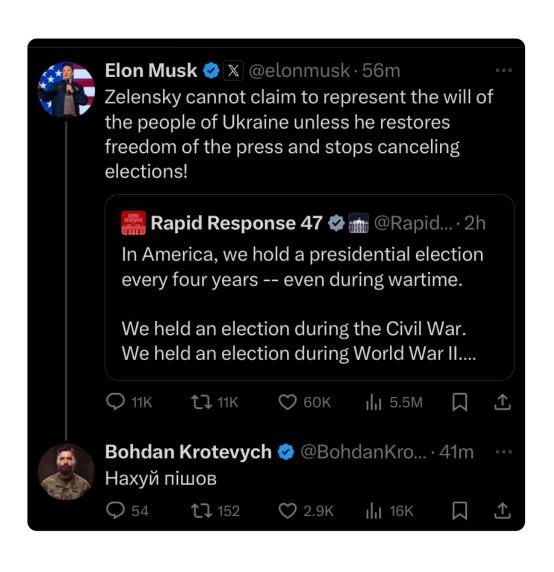
Trump says 'it's time for elections in Ukraine' amid ongoing row with Zelenskyy

'It's wonderful to say, you know, we can't have an election, but it's time for elections, and it's also time to find out what happened with all the money,' says US president

Michael Hernandez | 20.02.2025 - Update : 20.02.2025



China





Eventually, we will probably see accusations of Ukraine "banning the Orthodox church", supposedly limiting the freedom of religion. But the only "church" that's been banned is the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), actually an FSB front for espionage and propaganda.



THE KYIV INDEPENDENT

Thursday, February 20, 2025

Culture Investigations War Crimes Dare to Ukraine Explaining Ukraine Q

NEWS FEED, UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY, RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, RELIGION IN UKRAINE, CULTURE, UKRAINE

Zelensky signs law potentially banning Moscow-linked church

Share y 0 in M

tern Europe

by Nate Ostiller and The Kyiv Independent news desk and Martin Fornusek · August 24, 2024 3:57 PM ·



Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and Russian President Vladimir Putin meet with the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), including metropolitans Agathangel (Savvin), Lazarus (Shvets), Onufriy (Berezovsky), and Hilarion (Shukalo), on July 27, 2013 in Kyiv, Ukraine. (kremlin.ru)





The FBI suspected an employee of the Russian Orthodox Church of recruiting agents for Russian intelligence services in the United States

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation suspected Dmitry Petrovsky, an employee of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, of working for Russian intelligence.

The FBI believes that Petrovsky, under the cover of the Russian Orthodox Church, was engaged in recruiting agents for Russian intelligence services among priests and parishioners of the Russian Orthodox Church and other Orthodox churches in the United States.

In May 2021, Petrovsky was searched upon entering the United States. Files related to Russian intelligence were found on his computer. Among the documents found were dossiers on well-known Orthodox priests in the US with details of biographies of their family members. The FBI believed that such information was necessary for Petrovsky to blackmail these people during the recruitment process.

One of the files found was marked "confidential." The FBI cited it in full in its warning. Thus, according to the agency, this document contained a description of the areas of cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian special services - SVR, GRU and FSB.

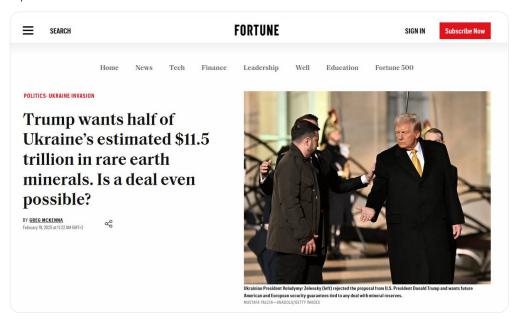


 $5:22\,\mathrm{PM}\cdot\mathrm{Sep}\ 20,\,2023\cdot\mathbf{641.8K}$ Views



When the elections are eventually held, Russia (and the US) will have their own candidate. This candidate will be heavily promoted and their opponent defamed. The Kremlin is willing to spend copious amounts of rubles to swing these elections.

20/22

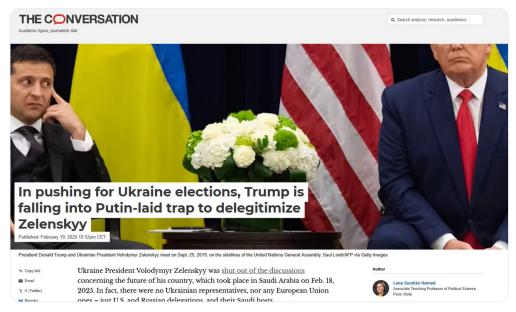


Blueprint for the eventual elections:

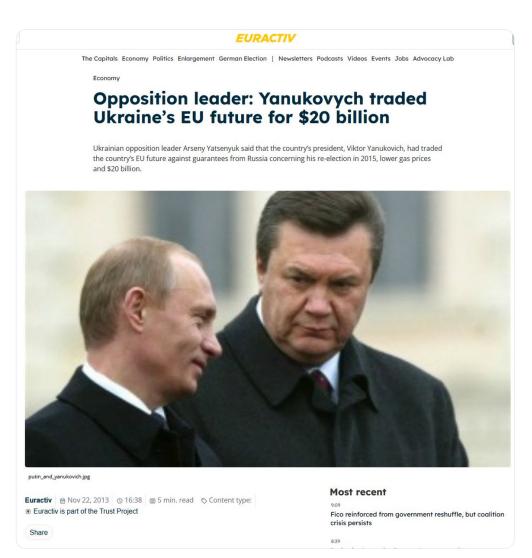
- 1) US calls constantly for new elections;
- 2) Putin and Trump promote the same candidate and defame their opponent;
- 3) This candidate may seem "pro-Western";

4) If elected, they will start selling out Ukraine to Russia and US.

21/22



To conclude, Yanukovych's story is a warning — Kremlin (and Trump)-backed leaders will always prioritize Russian interests over their own country. Ukraine managed to resist this hostile takeover, but they (along with the rest of Europe) need to prepare for the next attempt.



The 2nd edition of "Vatnik Soup — The Ultimate Guide to Russian Disinformation" is officially out!

You can order your copy here:



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