

A Distorted Lens Justifying An Illegitimate Ukrainian Government

Why does Western media ignore critical information about the snipers that killed Euromaidan protesters in Ukraine?

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Support it or oppose it, a coup d'état took place in Kiev after an [EU-brokered agreement](#) was signed by the Ukrainian government and the mainstream opposition on Feb. 21. The agreement called for power sharing between both sides through the formation of a national unity government and for an end to the opposition-led street protests in Kiev. President Viktor Yanukovich ordered the Ukrainian police and security forces to withdraw from their positions, and even earlier, he had made multiple concessions to the opposition leadership.

Instead of keeping its end of the bargain, the Ukrainian mainstream opposition executed a coup through the use of violence by organized ultra-nationalist gangs, which some analysts have compared to stay-behinds or secretive militias that were created by NATO during the Cold War.

These armed ultra-nationalist groups took over administrative bodies in Ukraine and fought until they managed to oust the Ukrainian government and opened the path for opposition leaders to take power on Feb. 25. The Ukrainian mainstream opposition used the EU-brokered agreement, which the Brussels-based European Commission deliberately refused to enforce, as a means of justifying the formation of a coup-imposed government.

In the absence of almost half the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada, or Ukrainian Parliament, the opposition parties began to arbitrarily pass unconstitutional laws. They also unconstitutionally selected Oleksandr/Aleksandr Valentynovych Turchynov as the acting president of Ukraine before President Viktor Yanukovich was even impeached. Intimidation and violence were additionally used to secure the cooperation of any disagreeing parliamentarians or state officials in Kiev.

Saying that the ultra-nationalists and fascists are marginal elements, the mainstream media networks in North America and the European Union have simply dismissed the armed ultra-nationalist groups involved in the coup that are presently integrated into the putsch regime running Kiev.

The militant ultra-nationalists, however, are very influential and amassing power under the illegal premiership of Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Yatsenyuk, himself, is from Yulia Tymoshenko's notoriously corrupt All-Ukrainian Union Fatherland Party (Batkivshchyna) and essentially a

U.S. and EU appointee. There is even a pre-coup [leaked telephone interception](#), likely either recorded by the intelligence services of Russia or Ukraine, in which U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland says that Yatsenyuk will be appointed as the prime minister of the Ukrainian government that the U.S. is putting together.

Act two of the Orange Revolution

It is unlikely that Yatsenyuk and the loosely-knit alliance of the governing parties that ran Ukraine under the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko governments, foreign-based Ukrainians, and the forces behind the Orange Revolution that form the Orangist camp which he belongs to could have gotten back into power in Ukraine without pressure, the use of force and foreign backing. Yatsenyuk was even threatened and booed by the Ukrainians gathered at Independence Square when it was announced that he would be appointed as the prime minister of the post-coup government. A vast segment of the protesters made it clear that Tymoshenko, Yatsenyuk's party leader, was no alternative to the ousted President Viktor Yanukovich in their eyes, either, when it was announced that she wanted to run for prime minister.

The Orangists do not have the support of a majority of the population, nor did they form the parliamentary majority in the Verkhovna Rada. Their Orangist president, [Viktor Yushchenko, only got 5 percent of the vote in January 2010](#), in a show of no-confidence, whereas Viktor Yanukovich won the first and second rounds of the presidential elections in 2010. According to Victoria Nuland, the U.S. has also poured \$5 billion into "democracy promotion" inside Ukraine. This is U.S. State Department doublespeak for politicized funding that Washington has sent to Ukraine to organize the Orange Revolution and its Euromaidan sequel or what can frankly be described as regime change.

The anti-government protests were fueled by Ukraine's economic decline and the growing resentment of the population against the corruption of the entire Ukrainian political establishment. The irony is that the economic problems in Ukraine are the handiwork of the economic policies and neoliberal restructuring programs of the same Orangists that are now in power in Kiev again.

The supposedly liberal Orangists are sowing the seeds of chaos and social anomie in Ukrainian society. The Orangists have worked to politically galvanize Ukrainians on the basis of sectarian lines and cleavages to divide the population by using a nationalist and anti-Russian discourse.

To rule Ukraine once more, the Orangists and their foreign backers have used and manipulated the ultra-nationalist elements of the population — [some of which are openly anti-European Union](#) — as their foot soldiers in an application of force against their democratically-elected opponents.

Despite their views, the ultra-nationalists are actually more honest than the Orangist liberal figures like Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Unlike the misleading and utterly corrupt Orangist leaders, the ultra-nationalists do not hide their agendas and platforms.

The invisible Ukrainian ultra-nationalists

While the mainstream media in North America and the EU look the other way about the ultra-nationalists in the coup government in Kiev, the facts speak for themselves. Both the

EU and the U.S. governments have rubbed their elbows with the ultra-nationalists. Oleh Tyahnybok, the leader of Svoboda (formerly the Social Nationalist Party of Ukraine), was even part of the opposition triumvirate that all the U.S. and EU officials visiting Kiev met with while performing their political pilgrimages to Ukraine to encourage the protesters to continue with their demonstrations and riots demanding Euro-Atlantic integration.

Svoboda has popularly been described as a neo-Nazi grouping. The World Jewish Congress has demanded that Svoboda be banned. The ultra-nationalist party was even condemned by the EU's own European Parliament, which passed a motion on [Dec. 13, 2012 categorically condemning Svoboda](#).

The text adopted by the European Parliament states: "Parliament goes on to express concern about the rising nationalistic sentiment in Ukraine, expressed in support for the Svoboda Party, which, as a result, is one of the two new parties to enter the Verkhovna Rada. It recalls that racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic views go against the EU's fundamental values and principles and therefore appeals to pro-democratic parties in the Verkhovna Rada not to associate with, endorse or form coalitions with this party."

Several members of Svoboda have been given key cabinet and government posts. One of the two junior deputy prime ministers, or assistant deputy prime ministers, is Oleksandr Sych. The ministry of agriculture and food has been given for management to Ihor Shvaika. The environment and natural resources ministry has been assigned to Andry/Andriy Mokhnyk. The defense minister is Ihor Tenyukh, a former admiral in the Ukrainian Navy who obstructed Russian naval movements in Sevastopol during the Russo-Georgian War over South Ossetia and who was later dismissed by the Ukrainian government for insubordination. Oleh Makhnitsky, another member of Svoboda, has been assigned as the new prosecutor-general of Ukraine by the coup government.

Andry Parubiy, one of the founders of Svoboda, is now the post-coup secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (RNBO). He was the man controlling the so-called "Euromaidan security forces" that fought government forces in Kiev. His job as secretary is to represent the president and act on his behalf in coordinating and implementing the RNBO's decisions.

As a figure, Parubiy clearly illustrates how the mainstream opposition in Ukraine is integrated with the ultra-nationalists. Parubiy is an Orangist and was a leader in the Orange Revolution. He has changed parties several times. After founding Svoboda, he joined Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine before joining Yulia Tymoshenko's Fatherland Party and being elected as one of the Fatherland Party's deputies, or members of parliament.

The ultra-nationalists are such an integral part of the mainstream opposition that the U.S.-supported Orangist president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, posthumously awarded the infamous Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera the title and decoration of the "Hero of Ukraine" in 2010. Foreign audiences, however, would not know that if they relied on reportage from the likes of the [U.S. state-run Radio Free Europe](#), which tried to protect Yushchenko because he wanted to reorient Ukraine toward the U.S. and EU. Parubiy also lobbied the European Parliament not to oppose Yushchenko's decision.

Other smaller ultra-nationalists parties were also given government posts, and several of the independent cabinet members are also aligned to these parties. Dmytro Yarosh from

Right Sector (Pravyi Sektor) is the deputy secretary of the RNBO, and the Trizub Party was given the education ministry. Trizub had Sergey Kvit appointed to the post of education minister.

The ultra-nationalists have inconsolably anti-Russian attitudes. Many of them also dislike a vast spectrum of other groups, including Jews, Armenians, Roma, Poles, Tatars, supporters of the Party of Regions and communists. In this context, it should come as no surprise that one of the first decisions that the post-coup regime in Kiev made was to remove the legal status of the Russian language as the regional language of half of Ukraine.

Right Sector is, itself, a coalition of militant ultra-nationalists. These militants were instrumental in fighting government forces and taking over both government buildings in Kiev and regional governments in the western portion of Ukraine. Despite the protests of First Deputy Defense Minister Oleynik, Deputy Defense Minister Mozharovskiy and Deputy Defense Minister Babenk, Arseniy Yatsenyuk's post-coup government has even given the [ultra-nationalist opposition militias](#) official status within the Ukrainian military and security forces. Yatsenyuk and the Orangists also dismissed all the officials that protested that the move would fracture the country and make the [political divide in Ukraine irreversible](#).

Western media silence about the snipers in Ukraine

The role of the ultra-nationalists in executing the coup has been essentially ignored by the mainstream media in North America and the EU. The roots of the bloodshed in Kiev have been ignored, too. The shootings of protesters by snipers have simply been presented as the vile actions of the Ukrainian government, never taking into consideration the agitation of the armed ultra-nationalist gangs and the mainstream opposition leaders for a conflict.

According to [a leaked telephone conversation](#) on Feb. 26 between Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet and European Union Commissioner Catherine Ashton, which was leaked by the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU/SSU), the snipers who shot at protesters and police in Kiev were allegedly hired by Ukrainian opposition leaders. Estonian Foreign Minister Paet made the statements on the basis of details he was given by one of the head doctors of the medical team of the anti-government protests, [Olga Bogomolets](#), an opponent of Viktor Yanukovich's government who wanted it removed from power.

Paet tells Ashton the following first: "There is now stronger and stronger understanding that behind the snipers, it was not Yanukovich, but it was somebody from the new coalition."

This is also corroborated by the fact that Yanukovich actually had ordered the Ukrainian riot police and security forces not to use lethal force.

The Estonian official then mentions that it was verified to him that the same snipers were killing people on both sides. He tells Ashton the following:

"And second, what was quite disturbing, this same Olga [Bogomolets] told as well that all the evidence shows that the people who were killed by snipers from both sides, among policemen and then people from the streets, that they were the same snipers killing people from both sides."

Another important point that Paet makes to Ashton is the following: "[Dr. Olga Bogomolets] then also showed me some photos she said that as a medical doctor she can say that it is

the same handwriting, the same type of bullets, and it's really disturbing that now the new coalition, that they don't want to investigate what exactly happened."

Past reports from the mainstream media that is hostile to the ousted Ukrainian government also raise serious questions that corroborate what has been said about the snipers intentionally killing protesters to instigate regime change.

The Telegraph reported on Feb. 20 that "[\[a\]t least three of the bodies displayed single bullet wounds to the heads,](#)" and "[were shot in the head, the neck or the heart. None were shot anywhere else like in the legs.](#)" This means that the snipers were making kill shots by design, which seems like the last thing that the Ukrainian government would want to do when it was trying to appease the protesters and bring calm to Kiev.

The Ukrainian journalist Alexey Yaroshevsky's account of the sniper shootings is also worth noting, and it is backed up by footage taken by his [Russian crew in Kiev](#). Their footage shows armed opposition members running away from the scene of the shooting of anti-government protesters. What comes across as unusual is that the armed members of the opposition were constantly agitating to start firefights at every opportunity that they could get.

The commandant of the SSU, Major-General Oleksandr Yakimenko, has testified that his counter-intelligence forces were monitoring the CIA in Ukraine during the protests. According to the SSU, [the CIA was active on the ground in Kiev](#) and collaborating with a small circle of opposition figures. Yakimenko has also said that it was not the police or government forces that fired on the protesters, but snipers from the Philharmonic Building that was controlled by the opposition leader Andriy Parubiy, which he asserts was interacting with the CIA. [Speaking to the Russian media](#), Yakimenko said that 20 men wearing "special combat clothes" and carrying "sniper rifle cases, as well as AKMs with scopes" ran out of the opposition-controlled Philharmonic Building and split into two groups of 10 people, with one taking position at the Ukraine Hotel. The anti-government protesters even saw this and asked Ukrainian police to pursue them, and even figures from Right Sector and Svoboda asked Yakimenko's SSU to investigate and apprehend them, but Parubiy prevented it. Major-General Yakimenko has [categorically stated that opposition leaders](#) were behind the shootings.

Following the release of the conversation between Paet and Ashton, the [Estonian Foreign Ministry confirmed](#) that the leak was authentic, whereas the European Commission kept silent. The mainstream media in North America and the EU either ignored it or said very little. *The Telegraph* [even claimed that Dr. Bogomolets told it](#) that she had not treated any government forces even though she contradicts this directly in an interview with CNN where she says she treated military personnel.

CNN, on the other hand, quickly glossed over the story, giving it only enough attention to create the impression that the network is fairly covering the news. Opting not to give the story the airtime that it deserved, CNN instead posted it on its webpage. The conversation is immediately discredited, undermined and dismissed in the first sentence of the article, which is attributed to Foreign Minister Paet: "[Don't read too much into the conversation.](#)"

The article was deliberately structured by CNN to undermine the important information that would challenge the narrative that the U.S. mainstream media have been painting. The title, sub-titles and opening sentences of most texts act as microcosms or summaries of the

articles, and in many cases, readers evaluate or decide to read the articles on the basis of what these texts communicate. Moreover, the first sentence of the article sets the tempo for readers and influences their opinion, too. Although anyone who listens to the [conversation between Paet](#) and Ashton and considers the evidence that is being discussed would realize just how important the news was, the message being set forth by CNN was a dismissive one.

The distorted lens justifies supporting an illegitimate government

The mainstream media genuinely selects which narratives prevail by deciding what voices to represent and the quantity and quality of coverage these voices get. Audiences should ask themselves some important questions about this. Whose voices are they hearing, and why? Why are certain voices excluded or deliberately ignored and other voices and points of view not excluded from the conversation? Why are some views credible and others discredited?

Evaluation is needed. The voices and accounts that challenge the narratives that are being promoted as reality to the public are ignored or undermined so that they do not defy the message or vision that the mainstream media is framing for audiences. Circumstances are deliberately left out of the narratives being reported or transmitted in many cases because of the justifications they can provide and the perceptions they can create.

A clear flow of information without any filters from Ukraine would cripple the public support that the governments of the U.S., Canada, Britain, France, Germany and Poland are providing to the coup leaders in Ukraine, which are themselves pawns of the U.S. and its allies. This is why audiences in North America and the EU are being presented a distorted picture by the mainstream media and the reason that there is an intense campaign to discredit the Russian media. Instead, the facts involving the murder of protesters by snipers in Ukraine and the coup have been trivialized, ignored or discredited by the mainstream media in North America and the EU.

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