

Bashing Ukraine

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Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#)

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

A previous article said Ukraine dodged a bullet. It abandoned an expected EU alliance. It did the right thing. Western media bashing followed. More on that below.

Europe's economy is broken. Wrongheaded policies assure greater trouble ahead. Why board a sinking ship?

ECB policy doesn't work. Its Long-Term Refinancing Operation (LTRO) is its version of Fed QE. Major European banks are insolvent. In the past year, over \$1.5 trillion was provided.

LTRO II is needed. Perhaps early next year. Maybe more will follow. At issue is an endless destructive cycle. Digging a deeper hole is no way out of today's punishing one.

Over \$1 trillion in LTRO I needs refinancing. Europe's banking crisis remains unresolved. Monetary heroin buys time. It solves nothing. It delays an inevitable day of reckoning.

Allying with other EU nations is irresponsible. It's wrongheaded. Doing so means sacrificing Ukraine's economic sovereignty. Foreign investors would benefit at the expense of internal interests.

Ukraine is considered low-hanging fruit. It's geopolitically important. EU decision makers want it exploited for profit. They want control over all former Soviet bloc countries. They want it at Russia's expense.

Washington's dirty hands are involved. It wants Russia weakened and isolated. The [State Department](#) said the following:

"The United States joins the European Union in its disappointment with the decision of the Government of Ukraine to delay preparations for signature of an Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the EU."

"The EU has offered Ukraine an historic opportunity to cement a European future for its people and demonstrate to international financial institutions and investors its unwavering commitment to democratic reform."

"We stand with the vast majority of Ukrainians who want to see this future for their country, and we commend the EU for keeping the door open."

"The United States is convinced Ukraine's integration with Europe is the surest course to economic prosperity and democracy."

Separately, the State Department said:

“Negotiations with the European Union (EU) on the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) that could move Ukraine toward a more open and transparent trade regime and improve the investment climate were finalized in 2011, and the broader EU Association Agreement was initiated in March 2012.”

“However, formal signature, ratification, and implementation of the agreement has foundered.”

The State Department blamed it on “broader non-economic criteria.” It said foreign investors find it hard doing business in Ukraine.

It stopped short of explaining they want things their way. They want them at the expense of Ukrainians.

John Kerry cancelled a planned a visit next week. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland will replace him.

On December 5 and 6, OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) foreign ministers will meet in Kiev. Regional issues will be discussed.

Trade deals like DCFTA are anti-democratic. They’re exploitive. They’re unaccountable. They subvert vital popular interests.

WTO, NAFTA, DR-CAFTA, and bilateral pacts imposed major constraints on federal, state and local governments. They did so on many non-trade policies.

They include food and product safety, financial regulation, natural resources extraction, access to essential services, and environmental issues among others.

They shift major decision-making away from local authorities. They transfer it to foreign investors and entities. They do it exploitively. They do it destructively. They do it at the expense of popular interests.

Global Exchange (GE) promotes social, economic and environmental justice. It calls globalization a “process in which goods and services, including capital, move freely within and among nations.”

It’s anti-democratic. It benefits vested interests. It affords capital a divine right. It harms ordinary people. It compromises social justice. It weakens hard won labor rights. It’s environmentally destructive.

It makes deregulation “appear good and natural,” said GE. It empowers international finance. It benefits investors disproportionately. It exploits people for profit.

It weakens personal freedoms. It’s a dystopian race to the bottom. It’s life-threatening for many.

At stake is subordinating local and popular interests to powerful/manipulative exploitive ones. It does so unaccountably.

Western media support the worst of these policies. They’re in lockstep against popular interests. They jumped all over Ukraine.

[New York Times](#) editors headlined “Ukraine Backs Down,” saying:

“(S)ign(ing) an (EU) free-trade agreement was to invite brutal Russian economic punishment.”

“Not signing (meant foregoing) European integration. (H)as Russia won the tug of war over Ukraine?”

“Not if Russia’s goal is to find its place in the democratic and civilized world.”

“The Kremlin’s strong-arm tactics against Ukraine and other former republics seeking closer ties with Europe may be popular with those of President Vladimir Putin’s countrymen who still rankle at the loss of empire, but they strongly reinforce the image of Mr. Putin as an unreconstructed cold warrior who will stop at nothing to retain influence over what Moscow calls the ‘near abroad.’

Fact check

So-called EU “free trade” isn’t fair. It’s one way. Ukraine dodged a bullet. Avoiding an EU alliance was sound policy.

Putin bashing is longstanding. He’s proud and reassertive. He doesn’t roll over for Western interests. He calls Russian sovereignty inviolable.

He pursues an independent foreign policy. He believes in international rule of law principles. He opposes Washington’s imperial ambitions. Western media call him a Russian strongman.

Times editors falsely called the EU a “voluntary partnership based on shared democratic values and economic rules.”

Putin favors “coerced association with no standards of behavior except for fealty to Moscow,” they claim.

Truth and full disclosure isn’t a Times’ long suit. Managed news misinformation substitutes. So-called Times “news fit to print” isn’t fit to read.

[Wall Street Journal](#) editors headlined “The Battle for Ukraine.” Its government “took a step back into Russia’s orbit,” it said.

Doing so “followed months of bullying by Moscow,” it claimed. It’s Russia’s “biggest prize.”

“Since retaking the Russian presidency last year, Mr. Putin has turned even more hostile to the West and sought to recreate a Russian sphere of influence over the ‘near abroad.’ “

Journal editors call Ukraine President Viktor Yanukovich a “thuggish pol.” He “tried to steal the 2004 election, they claimed. A “popular uprising stopped him.”

Fact check

Washington’s dirty hands manipulated Ukraine’s Orange Revolution. Ordinary Ukrainians ended up losers.

Yanukovich won a November 2004 runoff election. He defeated Viktor Yushchenko. Washington backed him.

He's a former Ukraine central bank governor. His wife held US citizenship. She's a former Reagan and GHW Bush official.

Yushchenko favored NATO and EU membership. His campaign prominently featured the color orange.

Western media promoted his Orange Revolution. Yanukovich faced unsubstantiated fraud charges.

Mass street protests were organized. Washington's dirty hands and supportive internal interests manipulated them.

It's similar to what's now ongoing. Daily protests resemble what happened in 2004. Civil disobedience, sit-ins, and general strikes occurred then. What follows remains to be seen going forward.

In 2004, Western interests prevailed. State Department funding helped turn Yanukovich's victory into defeat.

Ukraine's Supreme Court annulled the runoff result. It ordered a new election. It took place on December 26, 2004.

Yushchenko won. On January 23, he was inaugurated. Ukrainians lost out and then some. Not according to Journal editors.

They called what happened a model example of refusing to accept stolen election results. They ignored real electoral theft saying so.

"A good deal with Moscow (today) is bad for Ukrainians," they claim.

"An independent Ukraine that leans West will lead to a more peaceful Europe and make it harder for Mr. Putin to rebuild a revanchist Russian empire."

Journal editors take a back seat to no one in Putin bashing. They support the worst of US policies.

They're pro-war, pro-business and anti-populist. Their agenda is polar opposite what most people support and deserve.

[Washington Post](#) columnist Anne Applebaum endorses let 'em eat cake economics. She equates force-fed austerity with moral superiority. She believes everyone on your own sink or swim is right.

She calls euro straightjacket entrapment a gold standard equivalent. Losing monetary and fiscal control is good, she claims. So is abdicating national sovereignty apparently.

She headlined "Succumbing to Russia's big stick." She said "Ukrainians learned that their country really does lie on a fault line between two civilizations."

She called the EU a "rule of law" institution. Russia, she said, is a "civilization of arbitrary

rule, as embodied by Vladimir Putin.”

EU nations offer “a mild, undramatic association agreement, designed to promote wider contact and trade,” she claims.

She accused Yanukovych of “prefer(ring) drama.” He “abandoned (years) of negotiations.” She blamed Putin’s influence.

Ukraine’s best interests lie East, not West. Putin offers carrots, not sticks. EU terms mandate harsh structural adjustments.

A previous article explained they include mass layoffs, deregulation, deep social spending cuts, wage freezes or cuts, unrestricted free market access for EU corporations, corporate friendly tax cuts, marginalizing trade unionism, and harsh crackdowns on nonbelievers.

It bears repeating. Why board a sinking ship. EU economies are troubled. Force-fed policies are wrongheaded. They don’t work. Death spiral conditions exist.

Ukrainian protesters “understand the benefits” of EU-allied trade, claimed Applebaum.

Its politicians “don’t understand the nature of the EU civilization,” she added.

So far they had enough sense to avoid allying with its worst features. Hopefully they won’t jump aboard a sinking ship going forward.

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