

Cold War Crisis in The Ukraine

Control of oil: Key Grand Chessboard "Pivot" at Stake

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

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The bitterly disputed Ukrainian presidential election, and the crisis that is exploding in the wake of the contested outcome, has re-ignited Cold War and a new round of East-West conflict over control of Eurasian/Caspian/Black Sea energy.

Against the backdrop of [Peak Oil](#) (also check energy-related coverage in [From The Wilderness](#)), this conflict could well decide the geo-resource direction of the planet itself.

Amidst reports of election irregularities, Moscow-backed Viktor Yanukovich, who supports stronger ties with Russia, declared himself the winner over pro-Western opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko, in defiance of shrill and aggressive opposition and open threats from the West and the Bush administration.

In an example of off-the-scale hubris and irony, outgoing US Secretary of State Colin Powell—representing an illegitimate Bush administration that itself stole a presidential election through fraud and abuse just weeks ago—declared that “we cannot accept this result as legitimate because it does not meet international standards and because there has not been an investigation of the numerous and credible reports of fraud and abuse”.

The camps of both candidates have asserted victory, while accusing the other of staging a coup and inciting civil unrest. Intelligence operatives and provocateurs on all sides are undoubtedly working in high gear. In activity undoubtedly supported by the CIA and Western intelligence, thousands of “opposition supporters” remain in the streets, pressing their claim that the election was stolen, and threatening violence. Yushchenko has called for a [national strike](#). There are also allegations, still unconfirmed, that Yushchenko was [poisoned](#), and that he suffers from a “mystery illness”. Yushchenko’s camp is even calling for a [Supreme Court intervention](#), -i.e. Shades of Bush’s 2000 election theft.

Why does Ukraine merit such furious and violent scrambling by the various parties?

Whichever powers manage to prevail will hold the key to the control of Eurasian oil and energy, the political control of the Eurasian corridor itself, and the survival of Russia as a nation.

Ukraine: key square on the “Grand Chessboard”

Zbigniew Brzezinski’s 1997 book, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives* has served as a blueprint for world dictatorship, and an incriminating predictor of the post-9/11 world conflict. Against today’s explosive headlines,

Brzezinski's words are, once again, nightmarishly relevant:

"Geopolitical pivots are the states whose importance is derived not from their power and motivation but rather from their sensitive location and from the consequences of their potentially vulnerable condition for the behavior of geostrategic players. Most often, geopolitical pivots are determined by their geography, which in some cases gives them a special role in either defining access to important areas or in denying resources to a significant player [my emphasis-LC]."

"Ukraine, Azerbaijan, South Korea, Turkey and Iran play the role of critically important geopolitical pivots..."

"Ukraine, a new and important space on the Eurasian chessboard is a geopolitical pivot because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire. Russia without Ukraine can still strive for imperial status, but it would then become a predominantly Asian imperial state, more likely to be drawn into debilitating conflicts with aroused Central Asians, who would then be supported by their fellow Islamic states to the south."

"However, if Moscow regains control over Ukraine, with its 52 million people and major resources as well as access to the Black Sea, Russia automatically again regains the wherewithal to become a powerful imperial state, spanning Europe and Asia."

"Ukraine's determination to preserve its independence was encouraged by external support. In July 1996, the US secretary of defense declared, "I cannot overestimate the importance of Ukraine as an independent country to the security and stability of all of Europe," while in September, the German chancellor...went further in declaring that "Ukraine's firm place in Europe can no longer be challenged by anyone..."

"Without Ukraine...an imperial restoration based on either the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] or on Eurasianism was not a viable option. An empire without Ukraine would eventually mean a Russia that would become more "Asianized" and more remote from Europe."

"The states deserving America's strongest geopolitical support are Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, and (outside this region) Ukraine, all three being geopolitically pivotal. Indeed, Kiev's role reinforces the argument that Ukraine is the critical state, insofar as Russia's own future evolution is concerned."

Then Brzezinski goes directly at Ukraine's importance to world energy:

"For Ukraine, the central issues are the future character of the CIS and freer access to energy sources, which would lessen Ukraine's dependence on Russia."

"Accordingly, Ukraine has supported Georgia's efforts to become the westward route for Azeri oil exports. Ukraine has also collaborated with Turkey in order to weaken Russian influence in the Black Sea and has supported Turkish efforts to direct oil flows from Central Asia to Turkish terminals."

Neither the West nor Russia can afford to lose Ukraine to its geostrategic and geo-economic adversary.

An even clearer view of the conflict

It is critical to view Ukraine within the framework of an energy-rich Eurasian corridor that has been increasingly militarized by the US and the West since the late 1990s, and even more aggressively by the Bush administration under the 9/11/"war on terrorism" pretext. America's Silk Road Strategy (SRS) Act, adopted in 1999, explicitly calls for "strong political, economic and security ties among countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia".

Ukraine is a key member of the CIS, but more importantly, it is member of the GUUAM (Georgia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) military alliance formed under NATO, financed by Western military aid.

There is no more incisive explanation of the current conflict than can be found in [Michel Chossudovsky's book *War and Globalisation*](#) , in which he writes:

"Backed by US military might, the SRS is to open up a vast geographical region to US corporations and financial institutions. The stated purpose is "to promote political and economic liberalization" including the adoption of 'free market reforms' under IMF-World Bank-WTO supervision.

"This [GUUAM] alliance lies "strategically at the hub of the Caspian oil and gas wealth, with Moldova and the Ukraine offering [pipeline] export routes to the West.

"Dominated by Anglo-American oil interests, the formation of GUUAM ultimately purports to exclude Russia from the oil and gas deposits in the Caspian area, as well as isolating Moscow politically [my emphasis-LC]".

"In the context of GUUAM and the SRS, Washington has encouraged the formation of pro-US client states strategically located along oil pipeline routes. The latter are to be "protected" by NATO under GUUAM and various other military cooperation agreements. The hidden agenda is to eventually cut the Russians off altogether from the Caspian oil and gas fields [my emphasis-LC].

"With a view to weakening Moscow's control over Caspian oil, several alternative pipeline routes have been envisaged. The Baku-Supsa pipeline—inaugurated in 1999 during the War in Yugoslavia and protected military by GUUAM—totally bypasses Russian territory. The oil is transported by pipeline from Baku to the Georgian port of Supsa, where it is shipped by tanker to the Pivdenny terminal near Odessa in the Ukraine. Both Georgia and Ukraine are part of the GUUAM military alliance. This Pivdenny terminal has been financed—in agreement with the (neo-fascist) government of President Leonid Kuchma—by Western loans."

Geostrategic battle mirrored in corporate media accounts

The prescient (and in the case of Brzezinski, incriminating) analysis from both of the above cited books, written years ago, is echoed by current reporting in mainstream news.

A [San Francisco Chronicle](#) article offers the following:

“The United Financial Group, an investment banking organization based in Moscow, described the struggle in Ukraine as ‘a Cold War-style proxy confrontation’.” Yushchenko promised to turn Ukraine, a geographical bridge between the European Union and the energy-rich Caspian Sea and Black Sea regions, toward Western-style democracy....Yanukovych, on the other hand, advocates closer ties with the increasingly authoritarian Russia, its Eastern neighbor.

“An independent, Western-oriented Ukraine also could provide a crucial partnership for the United States and a potential staging ground for its pursuit of oil in the Caucasian region, according to Celeste Wallander, director of the Russia/Eurasia program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.”

According to a [Washington Post](#) report:

“In Russia’s view, the key to its continued influence in the region is Yanukovych.

“‘Russia cannot really afford to suffer a defeat over Ukraine,’ Liliya Shevtsova, an analyst with the Carnegie Moscow Center, said Wednesday. ‘Russia cannot be a power without Ukraine. It is historically conditioned, but it is also plain fact.’

“If Yushchenko became Ukraine’s president, though, the country could decide to join NATO and end its substantial military cooperation with Russia. Such a move, some analysts believe, could cost Russia as much as \$10 billion a year in contracts and other revenue.

“In contrast, a Yanukovych presidency would guarantee Russian companies access to vital energy pipelines—Ukraine exports 90 percent of Russian gas to Europe—and crucially, Russia’s own Black Sea fleet, currently headquartered on leased property in the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol [my emphasis-LC]”.

“Yanukovych’s defeat would signal the collapse of the classic Soviet-style bureaucratic structure in Ukraine and could result in similar regimes long Russia’s frontier—in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Belarus—giving way to democratic forces sooner rather than later.”

Bush administration crisis

Coming off of its own stolen presidential election, the priorities for the Bush regime’s second term are clear from the aggressive actions taken in recent weeks. The genocidal counterinsurgency operations in [Iraq](#) continue to foment escalating backlash and hatred. Bush administration leaders, including both George W. and George H.W. Bush, are engaging in feverish rounds of negotiation for increased militarization, narcotrafficking and

exploitation in Latin America, and meeting with resistance from both political leaders and angry resistance on the streets:

[Rumsfeld fails to forget new US-Latin America security pact](#)

[Bush provokes protests—and police—in Chile](#)

[Drug scandal rocks Gutierrez government](#)

[Jet crashes before picking up elder Bush](#)

Interference in Ukraine is one more example of the administration's desperate need to keep its oil-driven "war on terrorism" train from derailing.

The Bush administration's arrogant triumphalist rhetoric masks the fact that its plans for easily securing the world's last remaining energy reserves for its chosen elites is failing, despite its military aggression. It has also failed so far to "manage" a world economy that teeters on the brink of collapse, and one that is only sustained by book-cooking and criminal money flows, such as the renewed Afghanistan opium trafficking, re-established under US occupation. See:

[Afghanistan's disturbing poppy explosion/UN says nation tops Colombia as capital of illicit narcotics](#)

In the meantime, the Middle East is continuing to spiral further out of control—even under US military occupation. China continues to expand and evolve as an economic and military rival, a [direct super power adversary for oil and energy](#) .

The failure to install a pro-Western government in Ukraine will gravely threaten the US energy conquest, and perhaps derail the imperial agenda altogether.

Colin Powell threatened: "if the Ukrainian government does not act immediately and responsibly, there will be consequences for our relationship, for Ukraine's hopes for Euro-Atlantic integration, and for individuals responsible for perpetrating fraud".

Coming from the representative of the most criminal and militaristically violent presidency in United States history, there is little question what the "consequences" will entail.

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