

Who's Who in Ukraine's New "Semi-fascist" Government: Meet the People the U.S. and EU are Supporting

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The U.S. and European Union countries played a key role in the overthrow of the elected government in the Ukraine headed by Victor Yanukovych and the Party of Regions. Listening to the politicians in Washington or watching the corporate media, it would be easy to believe that the coup in the Ukraine has ushered in new era of democracy for the people of that country.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The new, self-appointed government in Kiev is a coalition between right-wing and outright fascist forces, and the line between the two is often difficult to discern. Moreover, it is the fascist forces, particularly the Svoboda party and the Right Sector, who are in the ascendancy, as evidenced by the fact that they have been given key government positions in charge of the military and other core elements of the state apparatus.



Dmytro Yarosh, Right Sector neo-Nazi commander who said "our revival begins with our Maidan," is now second-in-command of the National Defense and Security Council (covering the military, police, courts and intelligence apparatus).



Andriy Parubiy, co-founder of the fascist Social National Party, which later changed its name to Svoboda. He is the new top commander of the National Defense and Security Council.



New Prime Minister **Arseniy Yatsenyuk** [left], a powerful right-wing banker, meets with neo-con John McCain. Pictured center is neo-Nazi Svoboda leader **Oleh Tyahnybok**, now one of the most powerful figures in the country.



Ihor Tenyukh, member of neo-Nazi Svoboda party, now Minister of Defense.



Oleksandr Sych, member of neo-Nazi Svoboda, is one of three Vice Prime Ministers.



Oleg Makhnitsky, member of neo-Nazi Svoboda, now Prosecutor-General (Attorney General), and has immediately set out to indict the leaders of Crimea who do not want to live under the new order in Kiev.

That millions of Ukrainians, Russians, Greeks, Jews and others would abhor living under such a government should come as a surprise to no one. Seven decades ago, Nazi Germany and its allies invaded the Soviet Union, of which the Ukraine was a part.

It was inside the Soviet Union that the main forces of the Nazi war machine were destroyed—but at an appalling price. More than 27 million Soviet soldiers and civilians were killed and the country devastated. (By comparison, 416,800 U.S. personnel were killed in the same war, also a huge number itself, but one that only represents about 1.5 percent of Soviet deaths.) Highlighting its extreme right-wing character, among the first actions of the rump Rada (parliament) were terminating the official status of Russian and Greek as minority languages, rescinding the Crimea's autonomy, and outlawing the Ukrainian Communist Party. The Fatherland party is leading the new government, headed by Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

A few weeks before the Feb. 24 coup, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland, then in Kiev to support the anti-government protests, was recorded calling for Yatsenyuk to become the new leader. Yatsenyuk is a banker, very Western-oriented, and seen as sure to accede to the demands of the International Monetary Fund and the international banks for austerity measures in exchange for a “bailout” of the Ukraine's debt.

In addition, Yatsenyuk is not from an overtly fascist party, a major public relations advantage for Western imperialist backers of the new regime.

The new Secretary of the powerful National Defense and Security Council is **Andriy Parubiy**, is also listed as being from the Fatherland party. But here the murky divide between the right-wing and fascist parties comes into view.

Parubiy was co-founder of the Social National Party in 1991, an openly fascist party whose symbol was the “Wolfsnagel,” which closely resembles a swastika. The SNP changed its name to Svoboda (“Freedom”) in 2004, and has tried to somewhat moderate its image while retaining its neo-Nazi core.

It was only in 2012 that Parubiy ran on the Fatherland ticket. During the opposition demonstrations in the Maidan Square, he was known as “the commandant.”

Parubiy's deputy is **Dmytro Yarosh**, who was the leader of the fascist Right Sector's paramilitary forces in Maidan. In a recent BBC video, a Right Sector leader said: “National socialist [Nazi] ideas are popular here...We want a clean nation, not like under Hitler, but a little bit like that.”

The new Defense Minister is **Ihor Tenyukh**, former head of the Ukrainian navy and from the Svoboda party. **Oleksandr Sych**, also from Svoboda, is one of three Vice Prime Ministers.

Another key post held by an open Svoboda member is that of Prosecutor-General. **Oleg Makhnitsky** is now the equivalent of Attorney General in the U.S., and has immediately set out to indict the leaders of Crimea who do not want to live under the new order in Kiev.

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Svoboda also holds the ministries of ecology and, especially critical in the Ukraine, agriculture in the new government.

Though not named as a government minister—clearly by choice—**Oleh Tyahnybok** is the

leader of Svoboda, of which he was also a co-founder when it was known as the Social National Party. Now he is one of the most powerful figures in the country.

While Tyahnybok sought to moderate Svoboda's public image beginning with the name change in 2004, a speech he gave the same year showed just how paper-thin that cover was.

Speaking at memorial to a commander of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UIA) that collaborated with the Nazis and massacred tens of thousands of Poles, Jews and communists, he called for Ukrainians to fight the "Muscovite-Jewish mafia" which he claimed were running the country.

Tyahnybok praised the UIA and the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists led by Stepan Bandera, who "fought against the Russians, Germans, Jews and other scum who wanted to take away our Ukrainian state." (For the terms "Russians" and "Jews," he substituted extremely derogatory slurs).

In 2005, Tyahnybok signed an open letter to Ukraine leaders denouncing the "criminal activities" of "organized Jewry" who, he claimed, wanted to commit "genocide" against Ukrainian people.

Support for the fascists is surging in the Ukraine. In 2006, Svoboda received .36 of 1 percent in the elections; in 2012 it became the fourth largest party in the Rada (parliament) with 10.45 percent of the vote and 37 seats out of 450. In a public opinion poll taken at the beginning of February, 54 percent said they would vote for Tyahnybok for president if he ran against Yanukovich. (The poll was held three weeks before the overthrow of Yanukovich.)

The smiling faces of Victoria Nuland and Sen. John McCain, among other U.S. officials, have appeared in countless photos with Tyahnybok in recent months.

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