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**1. Ukraine's president says he knows who next prime minister will be
AP/The International Herald Tribune, 11 October 2007**

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia: Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko said Thursday he knew who would be named the new prime minister of his country following last month's early elections.

He said, however, that he would not comment on the possible formation of a governing coalition and the name of premier until the final results of the Sept. 30 election were announced.

"I know the name of the future prime minister," Yushchenko told reporters during a visit to Slovakia, where he met with President Ivan Gasparovic.

"The coalition can be formed only after the final results of the early elections are released," Yushchenko said through an interpreter. "That's the reason for me not to talk about it." Later in the day, he indicated in a lecture the final official results could be known in four or five days.

According to complete preliminary results, Yushchenko's party and the bloc led by his charismatic Orange Revolution ally Yulia Tymoshenko received enough votes to form a slim parliamentary majority. But Yushchenko has encouraged them to form a Cabinet with the party of his main rival, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich. The premier's party received the most votes, but not enough to govern alone.

"The winner of the elections is the Orange coalition," Yushchenko said. "They have a majority and, of course, they can nominate its prime minister."

Yushchenko had been widely expected to name Tymoshenko prime minister, but instead he left the question open and said Yanukovich's party should be given seats in the Cabinet.

Tymoshenko and Yuriy Lutsenko, leader of the pro-presidential party, said they were ready to grant Yanukovich's party deputy ministerial posts in all government ministries as well as the position of deputy prime minister.

They were also ready to cede control of influential parliamentary committees and the Audit Chamber, the parliament's financial watchdog, they said.

Yanukovich said if his party is excluded from the governing coalition it is ready to move into opposition.

The parliamentary election was called early to end a months-long deadlock between the president and prime minister and bring stability to the former Soviet state of 47 million people. But after the tight vote, the parties appeared likely to engage in protracted coalition talks and continue their tug-of-war for dominance.

Yushchenko insisted Thursday the tight result was not a tragedy, saying he was "very optimistic about the future of Ukraine."

In Slovakia, Yushchenko was aiming to boost his country's ties with this European Union member. The president would like Ukraine to join the EU and NATO.

"I have no doubts at all that Ukraine will join the EU," he said. "It's just a question of time," Yushchenko said later at a conference at the Slovak Foreign Ministry.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/11/europe/EU-GEN-Slovakia-Ukraine.php>

2. Yushchenko Guarantees Energy Transit The Moscow Times, 12 October 2007

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko assured Europe on Thursday that his government would meet its obligations to ensure Russian oil and gas exports flow across its soil on schedule and in full.

Yushchenko gave the assurance days after Kiev resolved a dispute with Gazprom over the payment of debts worth \$1.2 billion.

Gazprom had threatened to reduce supplies to Ukraine in a move many analysts saw as putting pressure on the country, as election votes were being counted, to form a government willing to work with Moscow.

The threat caused unease that Russian gas supplies to Europe might also be disrupted.

"Our government guarantees the timely and total fulfillment of all our obligations to transport oil and gas through our own territory," Yushchenko told a regional energy conference in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius.

Russia and Ukraine are yet to agree on gas import prices for 2008, which are expected to rise from the current \$130 per 1,000 cubic meters.

Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus said at the conference that the European Union needed to adopt a united policy toward Russia on energy issues because the supplier of one-quarter of the region's gas is "unpredictable."

"The European Union must develop a common approach to the issues at hand and speak in one voice," to deal with issues including "increased dependence on a single, unpredictable source of imports," Adamkus told the conference.

Reuters, Bloomberg

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2007/10/12/042.html>

3. Viktor Yushchenko seeks closer ties with Slovakia ForUm, 12 October 2007

President Viktor Yushchenko and his Slovak counterpart, Ivan Gasparovic, held talks in Bratislava on Thursday, President's press office reports.

Yushchenko said at a joint press conference after the talks border issues were at the top of Ukraine and Slovakia's cooperation agenda and added that the two countries planned to sign a border passing agreement, which will enable those Ukrainians and Slovaks that live close to the border to travel to Ukraine or Slovakia with no visas.

When asked about results of today's talks, the leaders said they had spoken about how to develop bilateral ties. Yushchenko said both countries were satisfied with their political, economic, trade and humanitarian dialogue, "its intensity and dynamics." He said their priority was to develop energy ties and educational cooperation. He also pledged to resolve problems at Ukraine's Kryvyi Rig Ore Mining and Processing Plant in a transparent manner.

Yushchenko and Gasparovic also discussed national minority issues. The Ukrainian leader gave his colleague declassified files with the names of the Slovaks that had died in Ukraine between 1944 and 1954.

Then they spoke about recent developments in Ukraine. Gasparovic congratulated Ukraine on holding last month's parliamentary elections in line with democratic standards and promised to support its bid to join the European Union.

Yushchenko invited the Slovak leader to visit his country, expressing hopes his visit will be "very productive."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://news.trendaz.com/cgi-bin/readnews2.pl?newsId=1043165&lang=EN>

4. Yushchenko presents list of Slovaks who died in post-WWII Ukraine The Slovak Spectator, 12 October 2007

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko presented his Slovak counterpart, Ivan Gašparovič, with a list of the names of 107 Slovaks who died in Ukraine in conflicts between 1944 and 1954, during an official visit to Bratislava on October 11.

Yushchenko said their deaths were caused by the communist regime and its intelligence services.

Gašparovič praised the excellent level of Slovak-Ukrainian relations, and outlined the areas in which they could improve. Yushchenko expressed his conviction that the Slovak Parliament would adopt a declaration declaring the famine in Ukraine in 1932-1933 as an act of genocide aimed against the Ukrainian nation.

Yushchenko also said Ukrainians think it is important that both they and Slovaks living near the common border can travel back and forth under a more relaxed cross-border trade system.

-TASR

Compiled by Zuzana Vilikovská from press reports

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.slovakspectator.sk/clanok.asp?cl=29451>

5. Ukraine accuses Russia of applying political pressure in gas dispute **AP/The International Herald Tribune, 11 October 2007**

KIEV, Ukraine: President Viktor Yushchenko's administration accused Russia on Thursday of seeking to use a recent dispute over natural gas to influence Ukrainian politics following parliamentary elections.

Russia's state-controlled natural gas monopoly, OAO Gazprom, said last week Ukraine owed more than US\$1.3 billion (€920 million) for gas and threatened to decrease supplies if it was not paid this month. Russian Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov later put the figure at US\$2 billion (€1.4 billion).

The move raised concerns of decreased deliveries to Europe and added to political uncertainty in Ukraine, where parties were in tense talks on forming a coalition and Cabinet following the Sep. 30 parliamentary elections.

"We regard it as a certain political pressure on Ukraine in this complicated moment of forming a new government in our state," said deputy presidential administration chief Oleksandr Shlapak, according to the president's Web site.

Gazprom made the announcement shortly after it became clear that opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko, who has tense relations with Moscow, could become prime minister. Tymoshenko has criticized the use of an intermediary in supplying gas to Ukraine and has promised to get rid of it.

This week Ukraine agreed to settle the debt, partly by paying cash and partly by handing some of its gas reserves back to Gazprom.

Shlapak suggested Moscow was also eager to weaken Ukraine's position before talks on the gas price for next year, which Ukrainians fear could rise from the current US\$130 (€92) per 1,000 cubic meters.

"In my view, the very timing and tone of the statement shows that Gazprom wants to see something more behind these negotiations than simply problems between companies," Shlapak said.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/11/europe/EU-GEN-Ukraine-Russia-Gas.php>

6. Gazprom nudges EU over limits to expansion plans **By Dmitry Zhdannikov** **Reuters, 11 October 2007**

MOSCOW - Russia's Gazprom said on Thursday it considered access to strategic assets as key to its relations with foreign firms and suggested it could take retaliatory measures if the EU decided to limit its expansion.

The world's largest gas producer and supplier of a quarter of Europe's gas said in a statement that it is working on "general principles for the participation of foreign partners in Gazprom oil and gas projects."

Gazprom would seek "gaining strategic assets abroad, cutting risks and improving the projects' economics thanks to the technologies of the partners, as well as increasing hydrocarbon production with minimal risk and capital expenditures."

Gazprom has repeatedly said it wants to diversify into Europe's gas transportation, distribution and power generation to gain added value and part away from its current focus on wholesale gas supplies to regional monopolies.

But many European politicians have expressed concerns about Gazprom's expansion plans following Russian gas cuts to Ukraine and oil cuts to Belarus, which led to reduction in transit supplies to Europe.

The European Union has proposed limits on the involvement of major gas suppliers in the block's gas distribution but said that it still welcomed their involvement in power generation.

Some European politicians have said the limits would copy those which already exists in Russia and other major energy producers, which give no equity access to outside investors to transportation and distribution facilities.

Russian politicians have criticised the EU's proposals, but Gazprom has so far said it was only studying them.

On Thursday, a Gazprom source said the company's statement amounted to the warning.

"If those limits are approved, we can also approve some kind of counter measures by setting some general principles in Gazprom's relations with foreign companies by some document," a Gazprom source told Reuters.

"We have no plan to approve it at the moment, we are only discussing it. We need to see what the EU does and whether their documents can be detrimental for our position."

"But of course it does not mean that, as of today or in the near future, we will put on hold our bilateral talks with any foreign partner," the source added.

Many foreign companies are seeking to enter joint projects with Gazprom, which controls around a fifth of global gas reserves, but the number of successful examples is limited.

In most recent such big deal, French oil major Total agreed to take a 25 percent in an operational company, which will tap Gazprom's huge Barents Sea Shtokman field. Talks have continued for around 10 years.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://uk.reuters.com/article/oilRpt/idUKL1117411220071011>

7. Ukraine: The Mysterious Gas Debt to Gazprom
By Roman Kupchinsky
RFE/RL, 11 October 2007

Ukraine has reached an agreement on its outstanding debt to Gazprom, clearing the air ahead of negotiations on gas supplies for 2008 and mollifying wary European consumers. But behind the turbid deal stands one outstanding question -- how was such a large debt accrued in the first place?

After the Russian energy giant Gazprom threatened earlier this month to cut off natural gas to Ukraine unless it received \$1.3 billion for past supplies, Russian President Putin remarked that "the large debt was totally unexpected."

An astonished Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Mykola Azarov told reporters in Kyiv, "It can't be true that the debt is as high as [Gazprom] says it is."

And Ukrainian Deputy Energy Minister Vadym Chuprun did his best to describe a complicated situation in which Ukraine is not responsible for the debts, saying that the many suppliers, owners, and operators involved in supplying Russian-controlled gas to Ukraine had to "settle their accounts first, and when the amount drops we'll see whose debt it is and whose fault it is."

The lack of awareness was difficult to fathom, considering that one of the companies deemed responsible for accruing the debt, the Swiss company RosUkrEnergo, has three powerful members of Gazprom's management committee on its board.

Even more befuddling was the fact that when the smoke cleared and the numbers of the debt-payment agreement were crunched, the combined debt by all debtors was \$2.2 billion.

Examining The Debt

The debt was purportedly incurred by two companies -- RosUkrEnergo and UkrGasEnergo (UGE), a Ukrainian-registered joint venture between RosUkrEnergo and Ukraine's state-owned Naftohaz Ukrayiny.

Much of the disagreement centered on ownership of natural gas stored in underground facilities in Ukraine.

When Ukrainian Energy Minister Yuriy Boyko on October 9 signed an agreement with Gazprom CEO Aleksei Miller to pay off the debt by November 1, it was decided that 8.5 billion cubic meters of gas belonging to RosUkrEnergo, worth \$1.2 billion, would be turned over to GazpromEksport. The remainder of the debt, \$929 million, would be paid by UkrGazEnergo and Naftohaz Ukrayiny from their own funds, in cash.

The full text of the signed agreement has not been published and has yet even to be seen by Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, raising fears that it will forever remain hidden from public scrutiny.

Perhaps this should not be surprising, considering the opaqueness of the system under which Ukraine receives Russian-controlled gas.

The middleman Swiss company RosUkrEnergo was created in July 2004 by Russian President Putin along with former Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma. Other key players in the deal were Yuriy Boyko, the current Ukrainian energy minister who in 2004 headed Naftohaz Ukrayiny; Dmytro Firtash, a Ukrainian businessman with no affiliation to the Ukrainian government; and Gazprom CEO Miller. RosUkrEnergo was essentially formed to replace the discredited Budapest-based EuralTransGas, which was later exposed in the Western press as being a creation of Gazprom and Firtash.

Gazprom presently owns 50 percent of RosUkrEnergo while Firtash and his partner, Ivan Fursin, a banker from Odessa, own the rest through a company called Centragas, which in turn is owned by the secretive Mabofi Holdings in Cyprus.

Medvedev, the deputy head of Gazprom's management committee, sits on RosUkrEnergo's board, as does Valeriy Golubev, who is in charge of Gazprom's sales to CIS countries. And Konstantin Chuichenko, the head of Gazprom's legal division, serves as co-director of RosUkrEnergo.

Trail Of Numbers

According to the January 2006 agreement signed between Ukraine and Russia, RosUkrEnergo -- at Gazprom's insistence -- was brought in to be the monopoly supplier of Central Asian and Russian gas to Ukraine.

The agreement stipulated that RosUkrEnergo would purchase a "basket" of Central Asian and Russian gas from GazpromEksport at \$95 per 1,000 cubic meters. The total volume of gas purchased by RosUkrEnergo, according to the agreement, was 73 billion cubic meters (bcm) -- about 20 bcm more than Ukraine consumed when Ukrainian production of 20 bcm is taken into account.

The extra 20 bcm was the commission Naftohaz Ukrayiny paid to RosUkrEnergo for its services. RosUkrEnergo in turn sold this gas in Europe to, among others, Emfesz KFT, a Hungarian-based company controlled by Firtash. Emfesz then resold part of the gas to Poland -- undercutting Gazprom's price -- and sold the rest on the Hungarian domestic market.

However, in mid 2007, sources in the Russian gas industry reported that Firtash's companies had accrued a debt to RosUkrEnergo of more than \$2 billion. It appears Gazprom became wary of Firtash's ability to repay the debt and decided to rein him in, but had little leverage over the maverick businessman who seemingly maintained a close working relationship with Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich's administration in Kyiv and, above all, with Boyko and Yanukovich's chief of staff, Serhiy Levochkin.

Considering the complexity of the gas-transit arrangement and the internal dealings, it appears that the October 9 debt deal is just a temporary solution to a recurring problem. And one can expect that the 8 bcm of gas returned to GazpromEksport will be used as leverage over the new Ukrainian government as negotiations for Gazprom supplies to Ukraine in 2008 kick off this month.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/10/7b1de221-4f2a-415e-a65a-5b6f50722624.html>

8. Ukraine eyes dropping RosUkrEnergo Earthtimes.com, 11 October 2007

Ukraine said it is looking into stopping the use of RosUkrEnergo as an intermediary for gas supplies.

Oleksandr Shlapak, deputy head of the presidential office, said this may happen as early as 2009 and that instructions on talks on the issues were sent to Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.

RosUkrEnergo is the sole supplier of a blend of Russian and Central Asian gas to Ukraine under a deal worked out in early 2006 between Ukraine and Gazprom, the world's No. 1 gas company. The firm is co-owned by Russia's Gazprom.

It was set up after a pricing dispute between Gazprom and Ukraine led to the temporary disruption of gas supplies to Ukraine and reduced flow to Europe.

Last week Gazprom again threatened to cut off supplies to Ukraine over more than \$1 billion owed by Ukrainian private entities. Kiev said it will clear the debt by Nov. 1.

Shlapak called Gazprom's debt "political pressure" by Russia, according to 5 Kanal TV.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/122799.html>

**9. Energy Summit of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland to be Held in Vilnius on October 10-11
Reuters/USACC, 11 October 2007**

The leaders of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland will try to revive a long-delayed plan to ship Caspian Sea crude to world markets bypassing Russia when they meet this week, a Lithuanian official said last Friday.

Kestutis Kudzamanas, Lithuanian ambassador to Azerbaijan, said the leaders would meet on Oct. 10-11 in Lithuania's Baltic Sea town of Klaipeda.

"There will be an energy summit in Klaipeda on Oct. 10-11, where the presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland will sign an energy partnership deal, which foresees creation of a company to ship oil to Europe," he said.

Ukraine has long advocated its Odessa-Brody project, running from the Black Sea to the Polish border, as an attractive alternative route to ship crude from the Caspian Sea to Europe bypassing regional monopolist Russia.

But the pipeline has long been dry as neither Azerbaijan, nor Kazakhstan, the biggest Caspian Sea oil producers, have seen it as an attractive route, saying it would require multiple re-loading operations which would make business very expensive.

The link is currently working in the opposite direction, shipping crude from Russia for exports via Odessa to the Mediterranean market, but Ukrainian officials have repeatedly said it would one day start working in the designed direction.

Poland's Economy Minister Piotr Wozniak said last month he had an initial declaration from Azeri officials that Caspian oil would flow in the Odessa-Brody pipeline, which could be eventually extended to the Polish port of Plock.

Azerbaijan's Energy Minister Natic Aliyev said this week Azeri state oil firm Socar could join the project, which could ship up to 300,000 barrels per day.

"If the study shows that the project is competitive, Socar will fully take part in the transportation of oil from the Caspian Sea to refineries in Lithuania, Poland and other countries," he said.

Poland and Ukraine rely almost entirely on Russia for their energy needs and want to get access to alternative sources. They have stepped up efforts to diversify away from their eastern neighbour ever since pricing disputes interrupted deliveries.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.usacc.org/content.php?id=3242&type=news>

**10. Leaders Discuss New Pipeline in Vilnius
Civil Georgia/Georgian Times, 11 October 2007**

The issue of construction of a new oil pipeline to transport Caspian oil to Europe through Georgia and Ukraine was discussed at an energy summit in Vilnius on October 10.

The leaders of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Poland and Lithuania, as well as the Kazakh energy minister participated in the summit.

The potential pipeline will transport Azerbaijani and Kazakh oil through Georgia and Ukraine to Poland and further to European markets, bypassing Russia.

During the conference energy ministers from the six countries signed a joint agreement on setting up a special group that will study all technical details of the project.

"The cooperation among the six countries has showed that we can work together and implement joint projects," the Georgian President's press office quoted Saakashvili as saying.

Along with the energy summit, Vilnius also hosted a meeting of GUAM leaders – a grouping of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova.

"Ten years ago, when this organization was established, nobody perceived it seriously," Saakashvili said in his address, "but today it is a very important international organization, which is cooperating with UN, OSCE and NATO."

"GUAM is a bridge between our Soviet past and European future," he added.

President Saakashvili, who already visited Denmark and Lithuania as part of his European tour, will visit Finland on October 11.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.geotimes.ge/index.php?m=home&newsid=7191>

11. Finding - or erasing - Ukraine's Jews?

By Omer Bartov

Ha'aretz, 12 October 2007

Last week's conference on the Holocaust in Ukraine marked a historical watershed. Over two dozen scholars gathered in Paris to discuss the murder of some 1.5 million Jews. I was fortunate enough to be one of the participants. The conference's significance derived from the fact that the details of the Jewish genocide in Ukraine are still relatively obscure. Since the fall of the Communist regime, there has been only a very gradual increase in research on what happened in hundreds of communities during World War II. But it was just as important that the meeting was co-hosted by the Sorbonne. This indicated a formal recognition by France's most prestigious university of the Shoah's historical significance.

Even more striking was the attendance of Father Patrick Desbois, who has spent the last four years gathering hundreds of testimonies and excavating hundreds of mass graves of Jews in Ukraine. This unlikely combination of a French Roman Catholic priest searching for evidence of local massacres of Jews in a largely Greek Catholic and Orthodox land struck a powerful chord in the media and made a deep impression on those who attended the conference. Finally, along with participants from the United States, Europe and Israel, the meeting also included several Ukrainian scholars.

If anyone is capable of turning the massacre of hundreds of thousands into a positive story, it is Father Desbois. But such a transformation of horror and despair into hope and a celebration of humanity calls for a certain narrowing of vision and a carefully circumscribed set of questions. As Desbois says, he has to "listen to these horrors - without any judgment." Yet my own rich collection of interviews and testimonies has provided me with a more troubling perspective on what happened in those towns that were once populated by several ethnic groups and are now almost exclusively Ukrainian.

Especially in the region of Western Ukraine, which once comprised Eastern Galicia, such testimonies have revealed a series of communal massacres in which the vast majority of the inhabitants participated. This is not simply a story of good and bad people. Some gentiles sheltered Jews at one point and denounced them at another. Some of the most active collaborators also hid Jews in their own homes. Hardly anyone was a passive bystander. The killings took place on a town's main street, in the nearby cemetery and forest, in the local hospital, marketplace and synagogue.

The Ukrainian participants in the conference did not spend much time on this issue. The Holocaust is still a highly controversial episode in Ukraine, and Ukrainians prefer to speak about the rescue of

Jews. But in Galicia, the cradle of Ukrainian nationalism and the support base of the country's Orange Revolution, there is also an active effort against attempts to recall the past. Almost all 500,000 Jews of Eastern Galicia were eradicated during World War II, with massive collaboration by Ukrainian nationalists. As I have documented, what remains of the sites of Jewish life and culture, as well as the sites of their murder, has in part been demolished, in part been converted to other uses, and in part simply left to rot.

But since Ukrainian independence in 1991, a new trend can be observed. Now the heroes of Ukrainian nationalism and liberation, whose memory was suppressed by the Communists, can be resurrected. The fact that they also actively participated in the mass murder of the Jews does not concern their supporters. The former Eastern Galicia is experiencing a memory renaissance. But this is strictly a Ukrainian national memory. As ever more memorials honoring the Ukrainians' struggle for liberation are erected, the remains of Jewish life are increasingly consigned to oblivion. Cemeteries have become marketplaces, synagogues are used as garbage dumps, mass graves remain unguarded and the bones of the murdered resurface during every thaw. And just as the last remnants of Jewish life and culture disappear, anti-Semitic discourse is back, and the Jews are blamed for all the suffering Ukrainians have endured, from the great famine of the 1930s and the Soviet murder of nationalist heroes all the way to the corruption of post-Communist regimes. This is not a tale of Christian love and reconciliation, but of intentional distortion and erasure. Yet it, too, must be told.

The current political situation in Ukraine does not offer much hope. President Viktor Yushchenko is trying to have the great famine recognized as genocide. Doing so will not only suggest an equivalence between Stalin's induced catastrophe, which cost the lives of up to six million mostly, but not exclusively, Ukrainian citizens, and the Holocaust. It will also serve to explain anti-Jewish actions in World War II. Nor can one expect much from Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, whose anti-nationalist stance is related to his links with the corrupt Soviet-era apparatus and his desire to reestablish Ukraine's ties with Russia.

One can only hope that Ukraine will learn from the example of Poland. The Poles long denied collaboration in the Holocaust and repressed the memory of their country's large and influential Jewish minority. Yet since the fall of Communism, things have been changing. Poland has discovered that it is far better politically and more profitable commercially to celebrate its multiethnic past than to deny it. But in the meantime, we must act now to stop the erasure of the last vestiges of Jewish culture in Ukraine. Beyond issuing public protests, Jewish communities in Europe, the United States and Israel can help preserve these sites. Ukraine is poor, and small amounts of money will go a long way. There is no time to lose, for the little that is left will soon disappear without a trace.

Omer Bartov is a professor of history at Brown University. His book "Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine" has just been published by Princeton University Press.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://news.google.com/news?hl=en&ned=us&q=Ukraine&btnG=Search+News>

12. Ukraine: Why Yulia Tymoshenko Is A Political Zero
By Kirill Pankratov
The Exile, 12 October 2007

THE POLITICS OF THE ETERNAL RETURN

There was another election in Ukraine last Sunday. If you feel confused, bored, or have a sense of déjà vu, you are excused. The whole world is getting tired of these endless elections, as are Ukrainians themselves. This is my fifth article on the Ukraine's politics among my 35 articles for The eXile (sixth if I add the one on the gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine in winter of 2005-2006), so I'm pretty sick of it, too. Over the past three years, which saw the Orange Revolution and its aftermath, I followed Ukrainian politics rather closely. I don't do that anymore, although just before Sunday's elections it was a hot topic among Russia's talking heads, and in the Zhe Zhe blogosphere.

Let's go back over this story, since there's no way around it. Ukraine had three rounds of presidential elections in late 2004, not two as is customary in saner countries (or according to Ukraine's own constitution). The government (of then Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko) that came to power in February 2005, was plunged into crisis just five months later, after lurching from one screwup to another, and was finally dismissed by President Yushchenko in September 2005 (see my article "The Gogolean Bordello" in The eXile issue #224 on the events leading to that).

The feeble caretaker government of Yury Yekhanurov existed for almost a year after Tymoshenko was fired, most of the time as a lame duck, as his faction lost its parliamentary majority after the elections in March 2006. Negotiations to form a new coalition government went on for some four months after that election, and in the end Yushchenko reluctantly offered the post of Prime Minister to Victor Yanukovich – the same "pro-Russian" bugaboo of the Western media who lost to Yushchenko during the "Orange Revolution."

As Yanukovich's party gradually consolidated its grip on power, Yushchenko saw that he was becoming increasingly irrelevant. So he dismissed the Rada (parliament) in March 2007 (unlawfully, but who cares, this is Ukraine) and he decreed new elections in April. The Rada refused to be dismissed, and voted to nullify Yushchenko's presidential decrees. A protracted stalemate ensued, which at one point featured a standoff between armed units loyal to opposing powers (the president and the government). Eventually a compromise was reached, and elections were scheduled for September 30. The Yanukovich government, now a lame duck, continued to run the show until then.

So far Ukraine has managed to avoid a "Russia-1993" situation (a violent confrontation between the president and the parliament), but instead it finds itself stuck on repeat like a scratched old record. Over the last three years the players in Ukraine's politics have all remained the same. First, the "Orange" camp which consists of two very distinct factions--Yushchenko's "Our Ukraine" bloc, whose main power base is the western part of the Ukraine, which had traditionally been part of the Hapsburg Empire; and Yulia Tymoshenko's party, the BYT (Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko), whose supporters come mostly from the central part of Ukraine, its agricultural heartland. And, finally, there's Yanukovich's Party of Regions, whose base is in the russophonous industrial regions in the south and east. There are also several small spoiler parties (of Vladimir Lytvyn and of Alexander Moroz, both former Rada speakers) which have switched sides many times and are available to the highest bidders.

This recent election campaign was very dirty, which is par for the course in Ukraine. Among the latest tricks that came to light was hidden-camera footage of Kharkov's mayor (associated with Yanukovich's Party of Regions) being coached by his advisors. The clip was circulated on the internet, and for a time it was the most popular clip on YouTube. In the video, the mayor tries to prepare a speech supposedly showing how much he cares for his people. The backroom dialogue was full of expletives, and the speech itself – was full of the most banal and trite political lingo imaginable. The other side apparently retaliated by posting another YouTube item – footage of Kiev's mayor extolling the virtues of religious consciousness in his speech, making 20-second pauses between words (Christianity, eh... mmm... Islam...), and looking drugged, or drunk, or just plain dumb.

The economy has been growing pretty swimmingly lately. It came to an abrupt halt in the months after the "Orange Revolution" (under Yulia Tymoshenko's dubious experiments), but then recovered, buoyed by the Russian boom nextdoor, with similar growth patterns occurring in much of the post-Soviet space: mobile phones, retail, car ownership, and now exploding real estate construction. Detractors might say that for a few years before 2005 Ukraine's economy grew at a 9-10% annual pace, while after the Orange Revolution it dropped to about 5%, below Russia's consistent 7% rate. Ironically, Ukraine's trade with Russia is higher today than before the pro-Western "Orange Revolution."

All of Ukraine's recent elections have been close and indecisive. Last Sunday's are no exception. As expected, the Party of Regions finished first, with about 34.5% votes. The biggest surprise was the strong showing of the Yulia Tymoshenko's BYT party, slightly short of 31%. But the biggest loser was President Yushchenko himself, with about 14%. The "Orange" camp overall gained ground slightly over 2006 elections, but now Yushchenko is a weak partner in a possible coalition with Tymoshenko. In fact, Yushchenko very likely dreads going into a coalition with Tymoshenko, as he had a bitter

fallout with her in 2005. There were credible rumors that he'd rather make a "grand coalition" with Yanukovich – that would have made Ukrainian politics more predictable at least. But Yulia again spoiled the party for everybody else.

Tymoshenko is considered "pro-Western" and a "reformer" in the American and European media. But what she really is an uber-populist. She promises everything to everybody. It is utterly pointless to search for consistency, logic or credible figures in her "program." This is true to some extent for all politicians, but not to such wild extent as with her. The last time such runaway populism was a serious force in Russian politics was in the early 90's, but in Ukraine apparently such populist scamjobs still work. And now Ukraine is about to step on the Tymoshenko rake for a second time.

If Yulia becomes Ukraine's PM, relations with Russia will be difficult for sure. Last May she published an article in *Foreign Affairs* magazine entitled "Containing Russia" in which she essentially offered her services (in case she'd return to power) as a buffer against Russian "encroachment" into Europe. For Tymoshenko herself this probably meant nothing. During her political career (as well as in the latest campaign) she has tried to approach the Russian leadership offering to be the protector of Russian economic interests in Ukraine. Still, her article was very depressing, but not because it was anti-Russian. It was full of all standard cliches of currently-fashionable American think-tank jargon. There wasn't a single phrase in her article that didn't look like it hadn't been copied and pasted from a report from the Hoover Institute or some other neocon lair. Tymoshenko wasn't the real author of the article, of course; it was reportedly written by her advisor, Dmitry Vydrin. He was associated with Grigory Yavlinsky's Yabloko party in Russia in the early 90's. But I'd doubt anyone in Russia could work with Tymoshenko now. After that article, Moscow's power elite could only regard Yulia Tymoshenko as just another Ukrainian whore working a tochka on Leningradskoe shosse.

But the Russian political class is, in general, tired of this Ukrainian political circus, as well as all the similar circuses in the larger post-Soviet area. Ukraine's last election campaign, in stark contrast to presidential election of 2004, was observed with mild amusement by Moscow's chattering classes. Back in 2004 many key Russians rather clumsily interfered in the presidential elections, trying to support Yanukovich's candidacy. Today the general feeling in Moscow is "go to hell--sort out your own mess." You can see Moscow's lack of interest in the decision to charge all of its neighbors the same price for Russian gas, whether for unpredictable Ukraine or seemingly loyal Belarus, hostile Georgia or friendly Armenia. For better or worse, Russia feels it is better associated with global structures and definitions such as the "energy superpower," the G-8, the BRIC leading emerging market countries, or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, rather than being a guardian of the squabbling post-soviet space

If Yulia Tymoshenko becomes the next PM, it will guarantee that the political mess and economic uncertainty will only grow. Ukraine has already stepped on that rake and got smacked hard in the face: her brief reign brought the biggest economic turmoil of the last 10 years, as Yulia tried immediately to re-divide Ukraine's spoils among her cronies, and to push ahead with the most populist and harebrained experiments imaginable.

Indeed the Ukrainian political circus is becoming less and less relevant overall. As a popular Ukrainian writer, Andrei Kurkov, wrote in *Der Spiegel* magazine two weeks ago: "Upon closer inspection, what looked like political chaos from afar in recent months is in truth merely a carefully controlled game of chess. The oligarchs are the players and the politicians the chess pieces. Without men like coal and steel barons Rinat Akhmetov and Sergey Taruta from the Donetsk basin, or Kuchma's son-in-law the pipeline builder Viktor Pinchuk, Ukraine would have fallen apart long ago. These men need stability to keep their businesses thriving. As long as they control the economy, the political theater in the country will have no serious effects."

Many people would agree with this assessment.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
http://www.exile.ru/articles/detail.php?ARTICLE_ID=13132&IBLOCK_ID=35

13. Pipeline Politics and Economics in Russia's Neighbors Stratford, 12 October 2007

Representatives from Ukraine, Poland, Azerbaijan and Georgia met in Lithuania on Oct. 10 to discuss energy issues, forging an agreement to link up with an oil transport network explicitly designed to minimize Russian influence. Currently, Russian oil infrastructure provides a near-stranglehold on the countries' options, with Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania forced to choose between cheap -- but politically problematic -- Russian oil piped in via existing Soviet-era infrastructure, or more expensive supplies that could arrive by sea.

The plan that the five have forged aims to construct alternate pipeline infrastructure in three stages. Stage one will ship Azeri (and perhaps Kazakh) crude oil from Baku, Azerbaijan, to ports on the Black Sea -- specifically Supsa, Georgia, and Novorossiysk, Russia. Stage two will reload that crude from tankers into a pipeline at Odessa, Ukraine, for shipment to the Ukrainian-Polish border. The final stage will extend this pipe north to the Polish port of Gdansk. The infrastructure for stages one and two is already in place, making the realization of the plan seem tantalizingly close.

As any Russian strategic planner could tell you, the problem is that when a project is designed for political purposes, it does not tend to be economically competitive. The biggest obstacle the states face in making these projects work is simple: All of them already have adequate and economically viable energy connections. The only rationale for the projects is to loosen the ties that bind to Russia -- in this case with a new infrastructure that almost certainly will cost more to maintain than what is already in place. If these states want to establish an independent infrastructure, no one is going to pay for it for them.



Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
http://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/read_article.php?id=296666

14. Personal ambition no, government yes by Editorial Post Kyiv, 12 October 2007

It has been nearly three years since President Viktor Yushchenko was swept into the presidency in the aftermath of the Orange Revolution. During that campaign, Yushchenko ran on the promise of reducing corruption and instituting substantial economic reforms.

After a hard-fought election, which required the active participation of millions of Ukrainians taking part in street protests, the newly inaugurated Yushchenko received a mandate for radical reform and change in Ukraine.

Sadly, his term in office has been marked not by bold leadership and promised reforms, but by infighting, incompetence and weak-willed leadership.

First, there was the dismissal of Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. That was followed by the formation a government with Viktor Yanukovich at its head, only to be followed by the calling of snap elections, which has left Ukraine without a government for the past several months.

More than a year after the collapse of the first Orange coalition, last week's parliamentary elections have given the Orange forces a narrow parliamentary majority. The strong principles of Tymoshenko saw her popularity grow and her vote increase to over 30 percent of the popular vote.

We would hope that President Yushchenko and Our Ukraine have learned from the errors of the past few years and aim to take advantage of this new mandate – and do so quickly.

Though their parliamentary majority is razor-thin – just two seats more than the required 226 needed to pass legislation – it is still a working majority and enough to form a government.

We hope that the two parties, Our Ukraine and Tymoshenko's Byut, can put aside personal ambitions and form a government.

Ukraine has been too long without a government. Let's hope the leaders of Byut and Our Ukraine will show some leadership and quickly form a coalition.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/editorial/27531/>

15. BYuT Has Candidates for All Posts Ukrayinska Prawda, 11 October 2007

The Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (BYuT) has prepared a list of candidates for all posts it will receive after formation of the democratic coalition with the Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc.

The information came from BYuT member Andriy Shkil, *Interfax-Ukraine* news agency reports.

“The BYuT has candidates for all posts, including the National Security and Defense secretary.”

At the same time, Mr. Shkil noted that it is not as important issue as formation of the parliamentary coalition.

He pointed out that all preliminary agreements remain in force that is the winner will receive the post of prime minister and other posts are to be shared on an equal basis.

Speaking about the democratic coalition, Mr. Shkil stressed that such coalition will have a slim lead that impart the parliamentary majority a “conditional nature” and the BYuT is aware of it.

“We consider all variants of the temporal coalition, however it does not extinguish our desire to lead the 'democratic ship',” claimed the BYuT member.

In his view, the democratic forces' slim lead “is a colossal advantage for society” and the strong opposition will have a positive impact on the country's democratic development.

Mr. Shkil emphasized that both the BYuT and Our Ukraine-People's Self-Defense Bloc has drawn a conclusion from the past mistakes and will no longer tolerate defectors.

When commenting on the possibility of the Lytvyn Bloc's joining the coalition, Mr. Shkil said that it is not a subject of the coalition formation.

He explained that the BYuT has conducted preliminary negotiations with Mr. Lytvyn and the latter may join the democratic coalition anytime but its formation will not stop in the event of Mr. Lytvyn's non-alignment.

In the end Mr. Shkil said that he welcomes separation of government's economic and power blocs.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

http://www2.pravda.com.ua/en/news_print/2007/10/11/9175.htm

16. Ukraine accuses Moscow of political pressure on oil issue Petroleumworld.com, 12 October 2007

The Ukrainian presidency denounced Thursday as "political pressure" Russian oil giant Gazprom's announcement that it could suspend oil deliveries to Ukraine.

The Russian oil giant rankled some in Europe after a frank announcement that it was going to reduce oil deliveries to the Ukraine if Kiev didn't honour its 1.3 billion dollar (900,000 million euro) debt before the end of October.

"We consider this move as putting political pressure on Ukraine, which at the moment is complicated by the formation of a new government in our country," Ukrainian presidential official Olexandr Shlapak said in a statement.

Gazprom's proposal was interpreted by Ukrainian analysts as a warning against the probable formation of a pro-Western government coalition in Ukraine after legislative elections on September 30.

"The time and the tone of these messages testify that Gazprom" must see paying the debt "more than a simple economic problem," Shlapak added.

Story by AFP 111929 GMT 10 07

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.petroleumworld.com/story07101205.htm>

17. Ukraine Leader Says Knows Name of Post Reuters, 12 October 2007

Yushchenko backed an orange government in the campaign, to be led by ex-premier Yulia Tymoshenko, his newly reconciled ally.

President Viktor Yushchenko said on Thursday he knew the identity of the prime minister to be appointed after parties form a viable post-election parliamentary coalition, but gave no details.

Groups linked to the "Orange Revolution" that swept the president to power in 2004 won a tiny majority in the poll, aimed at ending months of deadlock. But the party of his rival, Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, is the largest single group.

Yushchenko backed an "orange" government in the campaign, to be led by ex-premier Yulia Tymoshenko, his newly reconciled ally. But he has since said she could become prime minister only if a political deal was reached with Yanukovich's Regions Party.

Speaking during a visit to Slovakia, the president said he hoped a coalition agreement could be signed sometime next week.

"I already know the name of the future prime minister," he told a news conference alongside Slovak President Ivan Gasparovic.

He said the combined tally of two "orange" groups -- Tymoshenko's bloc and the pro-presidential Our Ukraine party "is the winner of the election, it has a majority, and obviously it has the right to nominate its prime minister." But he repeated that creating a coalition required "a constructive dialogue" between its parties and the opposition."

Yushchenko on Monday summoned all parties that won seats in the Sept. 30 election and gave them until the end of the week to produce a blueprint for a working coalition.

Leaders have since made few statements.

Tymoshenko said she would be willing to offer some of the current prime minister's allies top government jobs. And Yanukovich said his party was prepared to go into opposition if, after the talks, he was not kept on as premier.

Yanukovich backs the creation of a "broad coalition" bringing together his Regions Party and Our Ukraine, touted by some analysts as a way of bridging the longstanding gap between Ukraine's Russian-speaking east and the nationalist west.

Yushchenko has never called for such a pairing, but says his rivals must get some top jobs to build trust. Tymoshenko says she will go into opposition if a "broad coalition" takes shape.

Yushchenko defeated Yanukovich in the re-run of a rigged election in the aftermath of weeks of "orange" rallies.

But Yanukovich made a comeback last year and became prime minister after "orange" groups proved unable to form a government. He has since chipped away at Yushchenko's powers.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.javno.com/en/world/clanak.php?id=88907>

18. Ukraine, EU strive for closer military cooperation **Itar-Tass, 11 October 2007**

Ukraine and the European Union (EU) are striving for closer military cooperation, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, chief of the General Staff, Sergei Kirichenko and chairman of the EU Military Committee, Henri Bentegeat, said on Thursday.

During his first visit to Ukraine Bentegeat said he wished to learn more about Ukraine and its armed forces and display the EU's striving for cooperation with Ukraine in military affairs and in many other matters.

Kirichenko, a graduate from the Moscow-based Malinovsky Tank Troops Academy, underscored Ukraine's intention to integrate with "European and Euro-Atlantic structures."

He stressed the need for adjusting the Ukrainian army to NATO standards, which, he believes, "meets the national interests and preparedness for joint actions with the armies of European countries."

According to the Ukrainian Defence Ministry's press service, the sides discussed a wide variety of issues concerning the development of military cooperation between Ukraine and the EU.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=11957718&PageNum=0>

**19. Armed Forces of Ukraine ready for fulfilling peacekeeping tasks under auspices of European Union
NRCU, 11 October 2007**

Chief of the General Headquarters, commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Serhiy Kyrychenko said this at a meeting with Chairman of the European Union Military Committee Henri Bentegeat.

Mr Kyrychenko stressed that the Ukrainian military are able to fulfill peacekeeping operations under auspices of the EU and are ready for cooperation with the Armed Forces of EU countries. In his turn, division chief of the General Headquarters of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Borys Kremenetskyi specified that the story was not about sending Ukrainian soldiers on a concrete EU peacekeeping mission, but about the perspective.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=53233>

20. Rival Orthodox churches clash over treasured monastery in Ukraine | AP/The International Herald Tribune, 11 October 2007

KIEV, Ukraine: Rival Orthodox Christian churches clashed on Thursday over the handling of a treasured 11th-century monastery, with a Kiev-based church accusing a rival loyal to Russia's main church of destroying a landmark arch.

In an angrily worded statement, the Kiev Patriarchate alleged that the Ukrainian branch of the Russian Orthodox Church had dismantled the 19th-century arch because it was hampering construction work, calling it a "blatant insult of the history and culture of the Ukrainian people."

The golden-domed Kiev Pechersk Lavra that dominates the Kiev skyline is controlled by the Moscow Patriarchate, which answers to Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II. But it is considered a sacred symbol by both rival churches.

Archbishop Pavel of the Moscow Patriarchate denied the accusations, saying the arch was brought down in order to prevent an accident after parts of it collapsed, according to his press office. He said the arch would be restored soon.

Archimandrite Yevstraty of the Kiev Patriarchate also accused the Moscow Patriarchate of pursuing commercial rather than spiritual aims, and endangering the holy monastery by allowing its officials and parishioners to drive cars on its grounds and using heavy construction equipment.

"I estimate that soon the number of shops on the grounds of the Lavra will equal the number of cathedrals or even be higher," Yevstraty was quoted as saying by the Unian news agency.

The Kiev Patriarchate split from the dominant Moscow Patriarchate after the 1991 Soviet collapse. Since then, the two churches have fought over control of parishes, influence and property in the mostly Orthodox Christian nation of 47 million.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/11/europe/EU-REL-Ukraine-Orthodox-Clash.php>
