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January 17, 2014

Europe Report



A call for the boycott of businesses owned by presidential backers has had little impact.



Yuriy Lutsenko and Tetyana Chornovol, critics of President Viktor Yanukovych, got beaten.



Andriy Dzyndzya with the Road Control anticorruption group is one of four activists jailed.



Crowds are getting progressively smaller at EuroMaidan rallies that started on Nov. 21.

Boycott

Anti-government demonstrators are trying to pressure President Viktor Yanukovych by identifying and boycotting businesses owned by members of the ruling Party of Regions and propresidential oligarchs, led by billionaire Rinat Akhmetov. This is hard to do, since those in power own so much of Ukraine's economy.

Investigations/ **Victims**

Ukraine's law enforcers have blamed victims, harassed and detained demonstrators, obstructed journalists and, in general, signaled that they have no intention of solving such high-profile crimes as the beatings of Yuriy Lutsenko and Tetyana Chornovol.

Government Backlash

President Viktor Yanukovych and Prime Minister Mykola Azarov show no interest in compromising with EuroMaidan demonstrators or the political opposition. To the contrary, an orchestrated campaign seems to be under way to sideline opposition leaders, smear critics and use law enforcement to harass activists and rely on courts for favorable rulings.

What's On

Protesters remain camped out on Independence Square as EuroMaidan enters its 58th day on Jan. 17. However, a Kyiv court has ruled that such demonstrations as illegal, so a renewed police crackdown may come soon. Crowds at rallies are getting smaller, but new government outrages could spur a revival.

Oligarchs

In the dreams of EuroMaidan supporters, Ukraine's oligarchs would rise up with them and force out President Viktor Yanukovych. This turned out to be wishful thinking. Only Petro Poroshenko is clearly in the opposition camp. The rest have either fallen in line or are hedging, with news coverage in oligarch-owned media reflecting a pro-government slant.

Sanctions/ Counter-**Sanctions**

When the West talks visa bans, blacklists and sanctions, Ukraine's authorities threaten retaliation, such as tighter regulation of nongovernmental groups and reinstatement of

Media

At the start of EuroMaidan, news coverage in oligarch-owned outlets pleasantly surprised people by offering relatively fair coverage. That didn't last long. Journalists and media watchdogs say billionaire Dmytro Firtash's Inter TV has reverted to its traditional progovernment slant, while journalists continue to flee millionaire Serhiy Kurchenko's holdings. Some bright spots are Hromadske TV, Ukrainska Pravda, Nashi Groshi (Our Money) and others.

What's

Many people and groups are devising strategies that go beyond street rallies. The Democratic Alliance political party is one of them, holding hearings in Kyiv and around Ukraine to come up with a plan. Unable to force early elections, EuroMaidan is becoming a dress rehearsal for the 2015 presidential election. \rightarrow 2, 4



Rinat Akhmetov chastises protesters outside



Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko is one of the top enemies of EuroMaidan.



EuroMaidan activists want viewers to boycott Dmytro Firtash's Inter TV station.



AutoMaidan car caravans to picket officials' luxury homes irritate their targets.



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Jan. 16 market rate



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Activists say EuroMaidan will stay alive, but evolve with different strategies

BY OKSANA GRYTSENKO

When hundreds of people spontaneously gathered at Kyiv's Independence Square late on Nov. 21 to protest the government's decision to suspend preparations for a deal that would have deepened its ties with Europe, nobody expected that hundreds of thousands would soon regularly rally there, or that a camp there would remain through New Year's.

Two months later, the pro-European rally known as EuroMaidan, has survived one forceful break-up by riot police, several attempts to clear the square again after protesters took it back and many more tense nights in which rumors of possible police raids swirled.

Despite failing to achieve most of its goals, EuroMaidan has captured the attention of the world and returned a feeling of pride to many Ukrainians. But since the winter holidays, the rallies have become smaller, sparking doubts as to how long public support will remain on the central square and how the anti-government movement may transform.

Many rally participants have expressed dissatisfaction with its current form and demand some changes in strategy

"While in the beginning it was a revolution, now many people are coming just to eat and sleep here," said Inga Golos, a 16-year-old student from Khotyn, a city in Chernivtsi Oblast. "This is very sad."

The rally, now in its sixth week, has become a challenge even for its own leaders, none of whom would dare to dissolve it out of fear of being accused of betrayal or cowardice, political ana-



A roving protest on wheels is on its way to the palatial Mezhyhyria estate of President Viktor Yanukovych north of Kyiv. The aim of the Jan 12 car caravan was to pressure the president into resigning. (Kostyantyn Chernichkin)

lyst Volodymyr Fesenko said. So to survive fatigue, people are taking shifts to keep the street protests alive, albeit in smaller numbers, until the next presidential elections in early 2015. Then the opposition hopes to defeat current President Viktor Yanukovych.

Whatever happens, EuroMaidan will keep with its longstanding demands, which include the resignation of President Viktor Yanukovych and his government, the dismissal of Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko and punishment for all persons responsible for beating activists in the past two

These are the minimum requirements from the opposition, said Arsen Avakov, an opposition lawmaker from the Batkivshchyna Party and one of the

rally's commanders.

Activists, however, say it is essential to come up with new and more efficient forms of protest.

"Now everybody understands that just standing at Maidan brings nothing, except for excitement by how strong and principled we are," said Yegor Sobolev, a longstanding activist of the rally and leader of Volia public initiative, whose participants have been working to expose judges who have sentenced activists of EuroMaidan to jail.

Sobolev believes that EuroMaidan should become a training center for public activity, where people may come and learn about their rights and ways to counteract violations of government officials. "Many people would agree to come here at their own expenses from

all over Ukraine to learn this," Sobolev

One more efficient form of protest is AutoMaidan, the self-organized group that assembles car caravans to the houses and offices of state officials to pressure them into heeding the demands of protesters, he said.

Viktor Kylymar, one of the student strike leaders of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, said that new forms of protest have spontaneously developed amid EuroMaidan and is confident that many more will appear. 'We started marches to Mezhyhirya (Yanukovych's house), we are going to organize the stopping of Yanukovych's motorcade and we have been picketing government offices and businesses of representatives of Party of Regions," Kylymar said.

Vasyl Gatsko, leader of the Democratic Alliance party, says that if EuroMaidan dissolves, the government will start large-scale political repression. At the same time, his political party is now developing a new campaign to be launched in February. Gatsko said it will move protests beyond Independence Square.

This campaign will include educating the public about hidden assets of Yanukovvch and his cronies, exposing police officers involved in the beating of protesters and lobbying pro-government supporters in eastern and southern Ukraine about the real situation in the country.

We are making the protest accessible for every citizen, regardless of his location on the street, in the office or at home," Gatsko said.

Kyiv Post staff writer Oksana Grytsenko can be reached at grytsenko@ kyivpost.com.

Svoboda's rise inspires some, frightens many others

BY CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER

As hundreds of thousands of peaceful pro-European protesters were rallying on Kyiv's Independence Square on Dec. 8, just a few blocks away a group of Ukrainian nationalists were toppling a monument to Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin that had prominently stood at Shevchenko Boulevard and Khreschatyk Street for nearly seven decades.

Using a wench and steel cable, a few hundred athletic young men, some masked, toppled the red granite statue and proceeded to smashing it apart with a sledgehammer.

"(President Viktor) Yanukovych, you'll be next!" the group chanted as some mounted the fallen monument in triumph.

While those who took down Lenin gave no clear indication as to which political party they supported, the Communist Party of Ukraine was quick to point the finger at the far-right Svoboda Party.

"This act is testimony to what's happening in the country... that it is not a revolution or a democratic (process), but a neo-Nazi revolt designed to seize power in the country," Oleksandr Holub, a Communist Party lawmaker,



Nationalists hold torches during a march in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv on Jan. 1, 2014, as they mark the 105th anniversary of the birth of Stepan Bandera. Bandera was a Ukrainian politician and one of the leaders of the Ukrainian national movement in western Ukraine who headed the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists. (AFP)

said on Dec. 8.

But Yuriy Syrotiuk, a Svoboda spokesperson, told the Kyiv Post on the same day that it would be unfair to place the sole blame on the nationalist party. "Participants of EuroMaidan

altogether toppled the monument, which was standing there illegally. There was a presidential decree (by former President Viktor Yushchenko in 2009) about its abolition," he said.

Mass public demonstrations on

Independence Square over the past eight weeks have at times numbered in the hundreds of thousands of protesters and elevated the status of opposition parties of Vitali Klitschko's UDAR, Arseniy Yatseniuk's Batkivshchyna and Svoboda. However. Svoboda (Freedom) seems to have benefited most of all.

Lucan Way, a political scientist at the University of Toronto whose research focuses on democratic transitions and Ukraine in particular, told the Washington Post recently that Svoboda activists have been the protests' most "fearsome demonstrators."

The party's activists played a major role in seizing the Kyiv city hall and trade unions buildings, which protesters have occupied since Dec. 1, and in fortifying Independence Square, the nerve center of the protests. Often wearing helmets and gas masks, armed with clubs and even fire hoses, they have also been prominent in repelling raids on the occupied buildings and square by riot police.

These actions, experts say, have given prominence to the party.

Svoboda says it is the torch bearer of the World War II era Ukrainian Insurgent Army, a self-organized guerilla outfit that fought against both Nazi and Soviet forces with an aim to establish an independent Ukrainian nation. It ceased activity in the mid-1950s, well after the war ended. Also during that tumultuous period, some Ukrainians joined the Nazi army in a futile attempt to stop the re-occupation of western Ukraine by Soviet forces.

By 1991, ideological descendants of these nationalists founded the Social-National Party. In 2004, it became Svoboda. That same year, a controversial new member of parliament by the name of Oleh Tiahnybok was expelled following a speech in which he spoke of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army of the 1940s fighting against "scum," including Russians and Jews, and particularly the "Jewish-Russian mafia" controlling Ukraine.

Today that same stout, boisterous man, who often dons a traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirt, again is a member of parliament, but now also is the leader of Svoboda and one of the most influential voices at the EuroMaidan demonstrations.

A skilled orator, he often begins his speeches with the same phrases as those nationalists of decades past: "Glory to Ukraine!"

"Glory to its heroes!" the crowd answers back without fail.

Parliament passes controversial laws by show of hands, no notice, no debate

BY CHRISTOPHER J. MILLER AND **OKSANA GRYTSENKO**

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Despite opposition lawmakers taking over the parliament rostrum, supporters of President Viktor Yanukovych on Jan. 16 pushed through a wide-ranging law meant to quell public protests, restrict the work of nongovernmental organizations and crack down on independent news media and civic activism. And it was done with no advanced notice and no debate

Passed in a matter of seconds by a show of hands from deputies of the ruling Party of Regions and Communist Party, along with more than a dozen independent lawmakers, the contentious new laws - if signed by the president - will make it easier to prosecute activists, lawmakers and journalists.

Party of Regions lawmakers Vadym Kolesnichenko and Volodymyr Oliynyk authored the bill.

It makes the construction of tents and stages during public demonstrations without permission from authorities punishable by up to 15 days in jail or a fine by up to Hr 5,100.

The use of masks or helmets during demonstrations may lead to up to 15 days detention or a fine of up to Hr 4,250 under the law.

Also, blocking access to homes and offices of organizations would be an

offense punishable by up to six years in prison, while driving in a motorcade of more than five cars would be a criminal offense that could lead to suspended driving privileges and vehicle seizure. Both have been used as tactics by anti-government protesters recently in an attempt to force authorities into conceding to their demands.

What's more, a law on amnesty for participants of peaceful demonstrations, also adopted on Jan. 16, allows riot police officers to evade responsibility for beating participants of peaceful rallies as well as journalists covering them.

Speaking to journalists after the parliamentary session, Svoboda Party leader Oleh Tiahnybok said the passage of the bill was "simply a usurping of power." Under the new law, his statement can in fact be interpreted as extremist, and may be punishable by jail term.

World championship boxer turned politician Vitali Klitschko of the opposition UDAR party called it a "violation

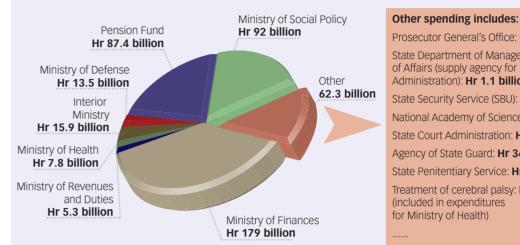
"They do not have the legal basis," he said.

As details of the law became public, social media users quickly drew parallels to Russia under President Vladimir Putin and Belarus under President Alexander Lukashenko, with one calling today's events and the bill the "Belarusification of Ukraine."

U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine

Budget 2014

Total state budget expenditures: Hr 447.3 billion (almost \$56 billion)



Prosecutor General's Office: Hr 3.2 billion State Department of Management of Affairs (supply agency for Presidential Administration): Hr 1.1 billion State Security Service (SBU): Hr 3.3 billion National Academy of Science: Hr 2.7 billion State Court Administration: Hr 3.6 billion Agency of State Guard: Hr 340 million State Penitentiary Service: Hr 2.8 billion

Treatment of cerebral palsy: Hr 12 million (included in expenditures for Ministry of Health)

Despite the opposition's blocking of parliament, scuffles and protests, pro-government lawmakers on Jan. 16 passed without debate a budget law for 2014 with 249 out of 450 votes. Critics say the budget is unacceptable because it increases police funding by almost Hr 3 billion while decreasing spending on health care. "This is the budget of the police truncheons," Vitali Klitschko, opposition leader of Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform, said.

Geoffrey Pyatt told the Kyiv Post that the actions taken today by Ukraine's parliament "are a step away from democratic principles that our bilateral relationship is founded on."

"We are all deeply troubled by the legislation that was forced through the Rada today in violation of existing parliamentary procedures," he said.

"The manner in which these laws were supposedly adopted calls into question their legitimacy.'

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt also weighed in on the day's events. "Dark designs against democracy clearly behind what we saw in Kyiv today. And ultimately against independence of Ukraine," he wrote on

The hasty manner in which the legislation was passed led to scuffles between lawmakers. At least two were injured, though not seriously.

Kyiv Post editor Christopher J. Miller and staff writer Oksana Grytsenko can be reached at millerjchristopher@gmail. com and grytsenko@kyivpost.com.

Changes in law that will affect EuroMaidan, other protests:

- · Movement in motorcade of more than five cars without permission of the police may lead to fine of up to Hr 850, confiscation of the car and loss of license for up to two years.
- Violations in procedure of demonstrations up to 10 days of arrest and fine by Hr 3,400.
- Use of masks of helmets during demonstrations or participation in rallies where other people use them may lead to up to 15 days arrest or fine for up to Hr 4,250.
- Set up of tents or construction of stages without police permission during the rallies -- arrest to up to 15 days or fine by Hr 5,100.
- Production and sharing including through the media of so called "extremist papers" that may include calling on to "mass riots" -- fine by Hr

3,400 or up to three years in jail if the person does this again.

- Blocking of access to houses or organizations -- up to six years in jail.
- Seizure of state or public buildings from three to six year in jail.
- Resistance to police or state representatives - from two to six years in jail or arrest by six months or fine up to Hr 8,500.

Changes in law that will affect journalists and media:

- Responsibility for libel up to one year of correctional labor or 200 hour of public works or fine by up to Hr 850.
- Responsibility for libel shared in media or on the Internet - up to one year of correctional labor, or 150-200 hours of public works or fine

- · Responsibility for libel together with other grave crime - up to two years in jail.
- Collection, processing and sharing of state databases with limited access - from three to six years in jail.
- Internet users of any sort can be banned from the Internet based on an expert decision that this particular user disseminates criminal information

Changes in law that will affect non-government organizations

- Law introduces a new term "foreign agent" that means non-government organization that receives financing from foreign states, people, NGOs and international organizations. Foreign agents will have to pay income tax, thus losing their non-profit status.
- These NGOs when publish some informa-

tion about themselves in media must indicate themselves as "foreign agents." They should also provide report on their activity every three months and publish them on the Internet and also state newspapers "Golos Ukrainy" and "Uriadovy Courier."

The activity of these NGOs may be banned by court decision if they violate interests of national security or public order.

Changes in law that will affect opposition lawmakers, citizens

- The procedure for removal of a lawmaker's immunity has been simplified to one step.
- A person can be sentenced in court even in absentia of any representative.
- All mobile phone users will have to sign deals with operators and provide information about

Sanctions pot still simmering

BY KATYA GORCHINSKAYA AND MARK RACHKEVYCH

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The main message of Vitali Klitschko's Jan. 13 opinion piece in German newspaper Bild was: We want sanctions from the West.

"From far away, condemning violence and the absence of a legal system in Ukraine is no longer enough," Klitschko wrote. "We immediately need international sanctions against (President Viktor) Yanukovych and his corrupt and criminal government."

The opposition and civil society generally agree, hoping that the U.S. and the European Union will issue visa-travel bans against top Ukrainian officials and start tracing their financial assets as part of a campaign to punish those involved in the violence and criminal prosecutions against EuroMaidan protesters as part of a broader rollback of democracy in Ukraine.

But it does not look like they will be getting their wish any time soon.

When a delegation of German EU parliament members came to Ukraine in December, their message to the opposition was clear: we do not simultaneously engage with governments and introduce sanctions to them, according to Marieluise Beck, the German Green Party's spokeswoman for Eastern Europe.

A Jan. 15 hearing in the foreign relations committee of U.S. Senate showed that the State Department has a lot of bark, but not much bite.

At the hearing, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for European Affairs Victoria Nuland offered little more than moral and possibly a little more financial support for Ukrainian civil society \rightarrow 7



Editorial

Dress rehearsal

While EuroMaidan hasn't yet achieved its goals of ousting President Viktor Yanukovych and putting Ukraine's European Union integration prospects back on track, the pro-democracy and anti-government protests have achieved a lot. The movement has evolved into a dress rehearsal for the 2015 presidential election, meaning that 2014 – just like 2004 – will be a year of protest.

The biggest achievement perhaps is to more starkly reveal the greed and moral bankruptcy of many who hold positions of leadership.

This newspaper, by the policy of the publisher and longstanding tradition as we enter our 19th year, will never be a partisan or opposition newspaper. To support one political force or another cheapens independent journalism. Regrettably, many Ukrainian journalists are forced into choosing sides and consequently fail to fairly report both sides. Some wear three hats at once – opposition politician, social activist and journalist. We just want to stick to good journalism at the Kyiv Post.

That said, we by far see the greatest threat to democracy and Ukraine's economic prosperity coming from Yanukovych and his supporters, including the ruling Party of Regions and most oligarchs.

We still hope that thoughtful reason prevails at the top because the nation faces its biggest crisis since the 2004 Orange Revolution. Today's troubles may yet eclipse that courageous effort to overturn a rigged presidential election that would have put Yanukovych in power then.

The Party of Regions on Jan. 16 rammed through, without public notice or debate, a raft of draconian laws that drop any pretense of transforming Ukraine into a European-style democracy. If Yanukovych signs these laws, Ukraine will regress back to the dark ages of authoritarianism, indistinguishable from most former Soviet republics where dictatorships flourish. One of them criminalizes libel, but there are many other dangerous measures. See coverage on page 3 and Katya Gorchinskaya's op-ed on page 5.

Before these laws were passed, the government or its agents were already well under way with a campaign to harass, attack or jail opposition activists and independent journalists as well as to put the news media into pro-government hands and squeeze out the remaining independent news outlets. The Ministry of Culture threatened religious freedom through a bullying letter to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, part of an attempt to re-establish the Kremlin-backed Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchy as the dominant church in Ukraine.

In response to threatened sanctions from the West, those aligned with the power structure – such as millionaire businessman Viktor Medvedchuk – publicly floated the possibility of returning Ukraine to a more isolated past by re-imposing visas on Westerners and having non-governmental organizations with Western funding registered as foreign agents, pages from Russian President Vladimir Putin's playbook.

Then there remains the perversion of the nation's courts, prosecutors and police, who behave as a state-funded private security service to protect those in power from harm or legal responsibility for ill-gotten financial wealth or violent crimes.

The behavior of this judicial system is reprehensible, starting with unidentifiable police officers who wear masks but not name tags to evade personal responsibility. In the investigative phases, the immorality furthermore continues with blatant smear campaigns against the victims of crime. Investigators suggested, for instance, that the beaten journalist and opposition activist Tetyana Chornovol may have suffered her injuries on Dec. 25 in a road accident. They suggested that ex-Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko may have been a drunken aggressor during the Jan. 10 rally in which police beat him and drew blood.

Orwellian logic prevails: Police had a right to crack down on demonstrators that night because protesters were blocking a police van carrying three convicted terrorists. The reality is that the demonstrators were protesting a kangaroo-court verdict against three men convicted of trying to destroy a non-existent statue of Vladimir Lenin. Trial by jury is still non-existent in this nation and rulings are made to order.

The outrages have made Yanukovych in danger of losing re-election. However, it is entirely possible for Yanukovych to win an honest election next year. Weaknesses and internal strife among the political opposition are the main reasons, as well as the sidelining of the president's main rivals. With ex-Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko in jail, the president's supporters are threatening to keep popular opposition leader Vitali Klitschko off the ballot with a new law that bans eligibility for anyone with foreign tax residency, as Klitschko has in Germany.

Opposition leaders have their work cut out for them to rally the public, persuade oligarchs to back them, win support from abroad and get elected. As for those in power, let's hope they have an epiphany. Perhaps the real blessing of EuroMaidan is that the two months of protests have exposed weaknesses all around – in society, among those in power and those seeking to gain power. If all learn the right lessons, hope remains for Ukraine, however fragile this hope appears at the moment.



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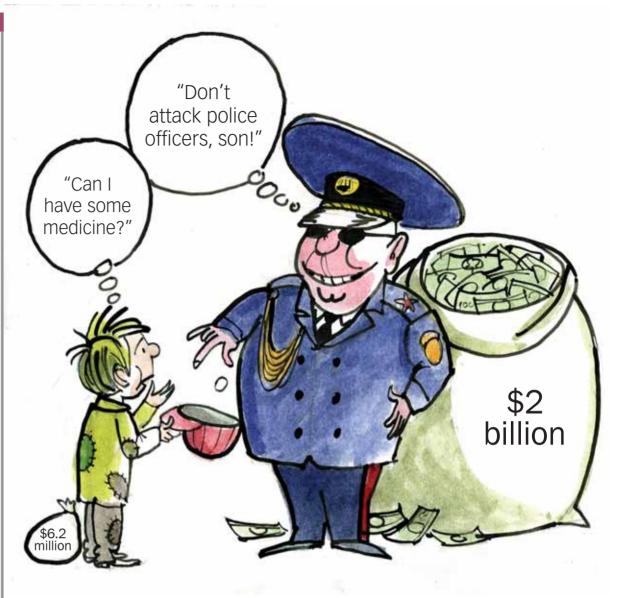
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NEWS ITEM: A \$56 billion government budget for 2014, passed by the Verkhovna Rada on Jan. 16, puts more money into law enforcement and less into health services, such as helping children with cancer – to \$6.26 million, a fourfold decrease compared to 2013. By comparison, spending on law enforcement agencies grew by 25 percent, reaching \$2 billion or nearly 4 percent of the country's budget. The spending priorities appear to show that President Viktor Yanukovych's administration is nervous about the EuroMaidan demonstrations that started in Nov. 21 as well as stiffening opposition to his expected re-election bid in 2015.

US should stay out of Ukraine's fight



Opposition activists have just staged their first demonstration of the new year in Kyiv. Nine years after the Orange Revolution against electoral fraud, opponents of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych hope to stage a repeat.

But the issue today, whether Kyiv aligns economically with Europe or Russia, doesn't much concern the United States. Other than warn against violent repression of peaceful protests, U.S. President Barack Obama's administration should not meddle in Ukraine.

Ukraine was part of both imperial Russia and the Soviet Union, despite the persistent desire of many for independence. When the U.S.S.R. collapsed, Ukraine became the largest territory to split off. However, in the years since it has been badly divided and governed.

In 2004 the Orange Revolution helped deliver the presidency to Western-favorite Viktor Yushchenko over Yanukovych. However, Yushchenko proved to be ineffective and inconsistent. He fell out with his one-time ally, "gas princess" Yulia Tymoshenko, the now-imprisoned former prime minister who made a fortune in the natural gas industry. When he ran for reelection five years later he finished fifth with 5.4 percent.

Yanukovych, a former convict allied with many of the country's business oligarchs, narrowly won the 2010 race. Although representing Ukraine's Russophile east, he kept Ukraine's distance from Moscow. His government prosecuted Tymoshenko for abuse of power in her natural gas negotiations with Russia. She is no virginal naïf, but the case was mostly about politics.

Most Ukrainians seem to favor a Western economic orientation while opposing a confrontation with Russia by joining NATO. Yanukovych followed that course, negotiating over an association agreement with the European Union. However, full membership remained far away given Kyiv's manifold infirmities and EU angst over the messy incorporation of Bulgaria and Romania.

Yet for just a halfway connection, Brussels demanded painful economic reforms and significant political concessions, most importantly Tymoshenko's freedom, and refused to offer cash assistance. At the same time Russian President Vladimir Putin pushed Kyiv to forswear the EU and join the Moscow-led Customs Union. To the consternation of Brussels, last November the Yanukovych government dropped the EU option and signed an accord with Russia — though without joining the Customs Union.

Although European officials later said that financial benefits would have followed signing the association agreement, Kyiv saw more conditions than payments. In contrast, Moscow brought cash to the table even as it threatened trade sanctions and a natural gas cutoff. Russia agreed to buy about \$15 billion in Ukrainian government bonds and cut natural gas prices by a third, worth another \$2 billion. The first gave Yanukovych's government \rightarrow 10

Feel strongly about an issue? Agree or disagree with editorial positions in this newspaper?

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Brothers, I come

in peace and

peace is what I

Welcome to Little Russia



As of Jan. 16, even traffic jams are banned in Ukraine. If a new law rubber-stamped by parliament on this day is signed by President Viktor Yanukovych, any unsanctioned movement of five or more vehicles will be enough to revoke a driver's license for up to two years and confiscate the vehicle.

The law, of course, was not designed to counter traffic jams, but to crack down on AutoMaidan, an initiative that takes protests to politicians' homes. It was ironically touted as a bill to improve public safety and fix holes in the law on the status of judges. But it instead tramples on many human rights while emulating Russian know-how. .

The bill was registered on Jan. 14 and then passed with 239 votes in the 450-seat legislature by show of hands. Once approved by Yanukovych, we will be able to say that here in Ukraine, we once had human rights. Now we're still human. But we have next to

You can no longer wear a protective helmet at a demonstration or use anything that the police would consider specially brought to a demonstration, such as a megaphone. They're all banned.

Libel is now a crime, and any attempt to spread information about crimes committed by government officials is interpreted as libel. In fact, even attempts to gather information about alleged crimes committed by law enforcers, judges and other officials are now criminal.

So, if you're in a crowd and take a photo of a masked riot policeman beating a fellow demonstrator, you have committed a crime and can go to jail for up to two years.

Any journalistic investigation is outlawed because it's not based on facts proven by a court. Such work, known as libel under the new law, is punishable by up to two years in prison. But actually you get away relatively easily, compared to those who take part in unsanctioned gatherings.

You can go to prison for 10 or even 15 years for that - we're talking about every participant of EuroMaidan here. Actually, if you happen to threaten a policeman, that gives you an extra seven years.

If you're an extremist and store or disseminate extremist materials, you can go to jail for three years.

that the president usurped power through making illegitimate changes to the Constitution), you already qualify.

And if you fail to show up in court, it can proceed with vour case without any of your legal representatives anyway

There will be nobody left to report on your troueither. bles. Freedom of the press is eroded by both criminalization of libel, and by a novelty that allows any website (or user) to be banned on the Internet based on an expert's conclusion. To reverse the measure. you need a court ruling, though.

A n attempt by civil society

to "influence the decisions of government organs' is interpreted as political activity and require special permission. So, if a non-government organization wants to draft a law, its activity will require a stamp of approval by the authorities.

Anyone getting financing from foreign sources from Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and Ukrainian Catholic University with their diaspora sponsors, to hundreds of nongovernmental organizations that have foreign donors - will now be foreign agents and will lose their non-profit status and privileges.

expect!"

NEWS ITEM: It's rare that a boss gets beaten by his former employees. However, this is what happened to ex-Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko on Jan. 10 during a rally to protest verdicts against three men charged with plotting to destroy a non-existent Lenin statue in Boryspil Russia via a \$15 billion bailout package.

> If applied, the new law, approved with many violations of procedure - such as no public debate or committee hearings -- will turn millions of people into criminals overnight, if they fall out of favor with those in power. All activists, demonstrators, volunteer investigators, journalists and their lawyers will become outlawed at once.

> Oh, and if you were beaten by the police, they will not be punished. And nor will their bosses who overstepped their authority and gave them criminal

We call it Little Russia.

reached at katya.gorchinskaya@gmail.com.

Inter TV - billionaire Dmytro Firtash and presidential chief of staff Serhiy

Lyovochkin - are among those on the economic boycott list.







What do you think should take the place of the Vladimir Lenin statue toppled on Dec. 8 in Kviv?



Yarynych, designer "I'm glad the city got rid of the Lenin statue. However, they did it illegally, which is not good. Now

numerous online architectural communities discuss the question - what should appear there? Some of them came up with really weird ideas like to place Yoda (Star Wars character) there. We need to think critically about what should be there.



Anna Savchenko. activist "I hope Ukraine finds new heroes who deserve to have a monument. We have lots

of monuments in the country, so maybe it's the right time to forget about the past and think about new real leaders of the nation. I'm sure that a Yulia Tymoshenko monument will be OK there, as she sacrificed herself for Ukraine's better future."



Vitaly Vasylevsky, retired "Why did they topple the statue? It's part of our historical memory. We have known about

Lenin since 1917. He was the one who freed people from slavery. The revolution is OK, but what we see is that nationalists want to be in power. So I hope no nationalistic 'heroes' will appear there. I think the right idea is to reconstruct the monument."



Kostyantyn Krasovsky, city council deputy "The place has bad karma, so it's not OK to put the statue hero there. It

will be better just to make a flower bed there and forget about Lenin. I'm sure we don't need another monument in honor of executioners - like Vladimir Lenin, Josef Stalin or Hryhoriy Kotovsky. A Stepan Bandera monument shouldn't be there as well. I think it's worth a better place."



Natalya Novak, "We have to statue back in its place.

businesswomput the Lenin That's already part of our

history, so the historical site should be preserved. I'm not sure we need something else there."

EuroMaidan activists push boycott of Party of Regions' businesses

BY IVAN VERSTYUK I.T.VERSTYUK@GMAIL.COM

Economic arguments can be particularly persuasive in political conflicts. Given the closeness of Ukrainian political parties to various business groups, the threat of revenue losses to them

parties. This is the thought that EuroMaidan activists had when they initiated a boycott on goods and services provided by

may be an effective way to influence

companies associated with the ruling Party of Regions.

In early December, a group of civic activists identifying themselves as Economic Resistance decided to target businesses owned by or are close to members of President Viktor Yanukovych's Party of Regions or people within their circles. The idea quickly spread.

Sergiy Petrenko, CEO of Yandex Ukraine, one of the leaders in the local IT market, backed the boycott idea. "An honest person might not be able to get rid of criminals, but he or she doesn't have to feel happy or be polite towards them. On the contrary, it's necessary to boycott them," Petrenko wrote in his blog.

Initially the list included less than 50 companies, but gradually it became longer as activists investigated property schemes behind certain brands and products. Thus, the January version of the list grew to more than 200 companies.

Banks on the boycott list include: PUMB, owned by Ukraine's richest man Rinat Akhmetov; Brokbiznesbank, owned by rising young oligarch Serhiy Kurchenko; Nadra Bank, owned by billionaire Dymtro Fritash; and Bank Forum, owned by mogul Vadim

PUMB communications officer Anna Kokoba said that the declared boycott has not hurt business, adding that "PUMB does not participate in any political actions and does not provide support for any political party.

But the bank's owner, Akhmetov,

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the boycott works - at least to some degree. One bank, which is no longer affiliated with the Party of Regions and was mistakenly included in the December list of companies to ban, reported an outflow of deposits in western Ukraine as a result of the

Social networks are full of reports of people canceling their subscriptions to media owned by presidential supporters. Yuriy Andreev, a EuroMaidan activist, said that at least one breadmaker affiliated with the Party of Regions started using plain packaging for its products to counter the boycott.

Confectionery producer Konti, poultry producer Gavrylivski Kurchata and preserved foods company Veres also are among the boycotted companies. Members of the Party of Regions' parliamentary faction Boris Kolesnikov, Yevhen Sigal and Novinsky, respectively, are owners of these entities. Konti, Gavrylivski Kurchata and Veres did not respond to the Kyiv Post's requests

INTERDEAN

RELOCATION SERVICES



Activists throw an issue of Rinat Akhmetov's Segodnya newspaper into the trash can on Dec. 27 as part of a boycott of all products associated with the ruling Party of Regions. (UNIAN)

Boycott ineffective so far as heed cal

for comments.

Automotive companies are not exempt from the boycott.

AIS and UkrAuto, major auto distribution companies, are there. The owners of these businesses - Dmytro Svvatash and Vasyl Poyarkov, who share ownership of AIS, and Tariel Vasadze, UkrAuto's owner – are closely related to the Party of Regions.

AIS marketing manager Sergiy Borovyk told the Kyiv Post that the average Ukrainian is not politically motivated in their consumption choices concerning durable goods, adding that he

does not expect the boycott will reduce the company's revenues substantially.

Major media outlets also are on the boycott list, including Segodnya newspaper and Ukraina TV channel, which are controlled by Akhmetov. Kurchenko's Forbes and Korrespondent and the largest TV holding - Inter - which is owned by Firtash and presidential chief of staff Serhiy Lyovochkin are also.

For those who take the boycott seriously, songs by Taisiya Povaliy, Volodymyr Gryshko and Nataliya Mogylevska are to be deleted from playlists, too, due to their affiliations to the ruling Regions Party.

Shakhtar football club fans are facing the tough decision to either support their team or the EuroMaidan protest, as the team is controlled by Akhmetov. What's more, Yanukovych is a longtime Shakhtar fan.

While fans from Donetsk are not expected to follow the boycott demands concerning their favorite club, its supporters from other regions could struggle with the choice.

Kyiv Post associate business editor Ivan Verstyuk can be reached at i.t.verstyuk@gmail.com.



ВСЕУКРАЇНСЬКИЙ БОЙКОТ

Posters showing popular brands owned by businesspeople close to the propresidential ruling Party of Regions have spread online. "If you buy anything that surrounds me, you will be cursed," says a woman in a traditional Ukrainian costume promoting the "National Boycott." (Courtesy)



www.agsmovers.com















West not certain of next step

→3 and independent news media. She reiterated that sanctions are an option, but merely a distant one.

"All tools of government are on the table, including those," she said. Frustrated by the lack of action by the government, some senators went

on to suggest that Congress will drive

the move towards sanctions on its own. In December, a bipartisan vote in the U.S. Senate made a step in that direction, calling for consideration of whether to "apply targeted sanctions, including visa bans and asset freezes, against individuals responsible for ordering or carrying out the violence (on Nov. 30 and Dec.1)."

Sen. Robert Menendez, a Democrat of New Jersey who chairs the foreign relations committee, went on to suggest that the Senate may consider its own legislation on sanctions.

"If the Yanukovych government continues to act against its citizens, as we have seen so far, then I'm not sure that we will wait for the State Department to look at sanctions and visa revocations against those committing those acts," he said.

The opposition has suggested lists of government officials who should face sanctions, while the Ukrainian diaspora in the U.S. has made its own suggestions. Moreover, sources in Washington say that the U.S. government has a list of its own.

Arseniy Yatseniuk, leader of the opposition Batkivshchyna Party faction in parliament, said on Jan. 13 said that Interior Minister Vitaliy Zakharchenko should be the primary target of sanctions since he controls law enforcers who have repeatedly attacked peaceful demonstrators in the past few months since mass demonstrations began on Nov. 21.

Moreover, as a member of the so-called "family" close to Yanukovych, any sanctions against him would send a clear signal to the very top.

A recent news report in Ukrainska Pravda suggested that, despite the official reluctance to use sanctions, U.S. authorities have intensified scrutiny of payments in foreign currency and have demanded more transparency about company beneficiaries.

But several bankers who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak about sanctions, told the Kyiv Post that these international control and screening procedures have been in place for a while, and started to tighten before EuroMaidan started. But they have been getting a lot of attention lately as an effective pressure tool, they say.

Meanwhile, local anti-corruption activists have been trying to come up with alternative ways of applying financial pressure against certain individuals. Investigations into assets and businesses of Energy Minister Eduard Stavitsky and Zakharchenko have been released recently.

A detailed interactive map of the president's luxurious estate Mezhyhirya was released this week at mezhyhirya.com. The business schemes behind the privatization of the park where the president's residence lies were released online in December, complete with names of foreign individuals and companies who are tied to the long chain of offshore companies and operations.

But activists can only do so much, and need authorities to back their effort.

"Law enforcement in Ukraine will never start an investigation here based on our information about (politically exposed persons) even though this information is enough to do that," says Daria Kaleniuk, executive director of the Anticorruption Action Center, a watchdog that monitors public spending.

"There are existing instruments to freeze the assets of Yanukovych and other members of his regime. But there needs to be political will abroad to voluntarily freeze his assets like what was done by the Swiss to freeze (deposed former Libyan dictator Mommar) Gaddafi," she says.

In the meantime, foreign asset tracing specialists say that Ukrainians can still learn to do more.

One tactic that anti-corruption groups use is to buy shares in companies with the aim of exercising minority shareholder rights to obtain heightened company disclosure information that includes accounting and other records that allow them to identify beneficial owners.

The main principle is the higher one's shareholding, the more information access they are entitled to in a particular company.

Russian anti-corruption blogger Alexander Navalny has been known to do this in his investigations, experts noted.

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UkrLandFarming, Cargill deal highlights China ties

BY ANASTASIA FORINA

NASTYA.FORINA@GMAIL.COM

The recent \$200 million purchase of a five percent stake in Ukraine's largest agribusiness holding UkrLandFarming by American Cargill, one of the world's largest producers and suppliers of agriculture products, captured the world's attention

It also provided a glimpse into the value of a company that boasts of having the world's eighth largest agricultural land bank, as well as its plans to make inroads into the Chinese market, where Cargill is already a big player.

But it won't be easy to enter the world's biggest market of 13 billion consumers.

UkrLandFarming's owner, Ukrainian billionaire Oleg Bakhmatiuk, has said the company plans to export grain and corn to China. So far, the State Food and Grain Corporation (SFGC) is the only Ukrainian company doing significant business with the world's second largest economy.

A corresponding agreement signed in 2012 implies 90 million of tons of grain are to be provided by SFGC to China over 15 years in exchange for a \$1.5 billion loan and another \$1.5 billion to purchase Chinese services or equipment. The deal was signed on behalf of the state-run company and the Export-Import Bank of China.

In the 2013-2014 marketing year ending in July, SFGC is expected to export four million tons of grain. However, its grain terminal is limited to just 2.5 million tons of grain per year. As of the end of 2013, it had exported two million, Robert Brovdi, first deputy chairman of the board of the corporation said in a recent interview with Business TV channel. Agriculture Minister Mykola Prysiazhnyuk earlier said that SFGC plans to buy 2 million tons in February 2014, according to UNIAN news agency.

At the end of 2013, UkrLandfarming announced plans to export 2.5 million tons of grain in the 2013-2014 marketing year, while Bakhmatiuk voiced plans to start building a terminal with the ability to move 5-10 million tons per year in 2014. So far, the main



A grain storehouse in Kyiv Oblast. Ukraine has a billion-dollar deal with China to supply it with grain for 15 years. (UNIAN)

recipients of the company's grain are European Union countries that receive 50 percent of its exports.

Maria Kolesnyk, an expert at AAA agricultural agency, says cooperation with the state agency is much more beneficial for China than the one it could have with a private supplier.

"China is a very interesting market and almost all states and exporters are fighting for this market. However, it's not the country that will play under somebody's conditions," Kolesnyk says. "That's why working with a state-run firm is a bargain for them. By giving...loans to Ukraine, China can push it regarding price and other conditions which is impossible to do with (private) business."

The agriculture sector is not the only example of how loans and investment from China work. For example, a Chinese company is slated to build a high-speed passenger transportation service from the central Kyiv train station to Kyiv Boryspil Airport. The project is worth \$372.3 million and is financed by the Export-Import Bank of China and is to be commissioned in 2014, according to the State Agency for Investment and National Projects of Ukraine.

A large Chinese state firm in September also announced its interest in bidding to construct a large ring road around Kyiv worth more than \$582 million.

UkrLandFarming – which owns 77

percent of London-listed egg producer Avangardco — still hopes to directly enter the Chinese market, which is related to the recent deal, in particular. It has been providing Cargill's grain department with 1-1.5 million tons of grain annually, according to the company's official statement. "The companies are now also discussing development of other projects, in particular, mutual support for UkrLandFarming to enter Asian markets, including China," it reads.

China has rejected imports of U.S. corn after it found genetically modified cultivars in supplies. In 2013 the country rejected 601,000 tons of corn, according to ProAgro, a Ukrainian agricultural news portal. Meanwhile, Igor Petrashko, deputy head of UkrLandFarming, has announced the company's plans to export 750 million tons of corn to China in the 2013-2014 marketing year in a November interview with Kommersant daily newspaper.

"Such a deal at the level of share-holder's capital in one of Ukraine's largest producers is an important factor for stable agricultural sales in fast-growing China market," said Roman Topolyuk, an analyst at Concorde Capital investment house.

Kyiv Post staff writer Anastasia Forina can be reached at nastya.forina@gmail. com.







English Cinema Club

Freud House is hosting yet another movie screening. This time the film is "Up in the Air" by Jason Reitman. The film tells the story of Ryan Bingham (George Clooney), whose job it is to fly around the country and take charge of corporate layoffs. But everything changes when suddenly his own company's strategy changes and grounds him. Freud House invites viewers to stay after the screening to enjoy a cup of coffee and discuss the movie.

Screening of "Up in the Air" by Jason Reitman. Jan. 19. 3 p.m. Freud House (21 Konstantinovska St.) Hr 20 and Freud House's hourly fee (Hr 32 for the first hour)

Volosi Christmas tour concert

Polish band Volosi is a thrilling combination of folk, classical and modern tunes played with violins, cello and a double bass. Created in 2010, the band has already won over thousands of hearts. First introduced to a Ukrainian audience in 2012, the band played at the well-known international festival ArtPole. The Ukrainian tour of the band will cover five cities in Kyiv, Odesa, Kharkiv, Zaporizhya, and Alchevsk.

Volosi band. Jan. 15. 7 p.m. M17 Modern Art Center (102 – 104 Horkoho St.) Hr 70 - 90





Evheniy Hromov in concert

The very talented pianist Evheniy Hromov is set to transport his audience to France of the 17th and 18th centuries with music from the Beautiful Era – La belle époque. The program of the night will include a performance of the best works by Jean-Philippe Rameau, Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel and Erik Satie.

Evheniy Hromov. Piano Concert. Jan. 17. 8 p.m. Master Class Cultural Center (16 Mazepy St.)

Northern Breed Dogs

The annual Northern Breed Dogs' Championship is going to take place again this year in Kyiv. Apart from the standard dog show, there will be a contest for the best dog's New Year costume. To register a dog for the championship, call 044-361-84-47 or 067-285-96-26. The best dog according to the judges will receive the honorable title of Ukraine's Champion. Northern Breed Dogs' Championship. Jan. 18. 10 a.m. NSK Olimpiyskiy (55 Velyka Vasilkivska St.) Free of charge. Entrance through gates West 4

and West 5









Crystal music

Vlad Nikitin is one of the band members of Crystal Harmony, an exotic tandem that creates original music using a verrophone and aglass-harp. He will give a solo performance – and for just one night – to introduce his solo album, "Parade Planet" (The Parade of Planets). The out-of-this-world sounds he produces with his verrophone are going to be bolstered by a special 3D show, projected on the dome of the building.

*Vlad Nikitin. "Parad Planet". Jan. 25. 8:30 p.m. Atmasfera 360 (57 – 3 Velyka Vasilkivska St.) Hr 60 - 100



French movies coming

The Kyiv Movie Theater presents the French Movie Festival this January. The program includes the screening of five French movies: "9 Mois Ferme" (9 Month Stretch), "Grand Central, Elle s'en va" (On My Way), "Un château en Italie" (A Castle in Italy) and "Les beaux jours" (Bright Days Ahead). The film "Grand Central," directed by Rebecca Zlotowski, won a François Chalais Prize at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. All of the movies are screened in French with Ukrainian subtitles.

French Movie Festival. Jan. 23. Kyiv Movie Theater (19 Velyka Vasilkivska St.) For tickets and more information go to http://www.kievkino.com.ua/ru/1273/index.html

Compiled by Alisa Shulkina

Nationalist slogans, symbols prevalent at demonstrations

→ 2 Many at the protests are Svoboda backers, but most of the tens of thousands are from opposition parties Batkivschyna and UDAR, which have the two largest opposition factions in parliament, with 90 and 42 seats, respectively, compared to Svoboda's 36 places. Some are independent or simply against the president and his ruling Regions Party. Despite that, they've fallen in line with Svoboda rhetoric in the crowd, answering with the nationalist slogan whenever prompted.

The type of rhetoric spouted by Tiahnybok and the ease with which pro-European protesters on Independence Square have adopted and repurposed nationalist slogans has unnerved many, including Ukrainian Jewish leaders such as Oleksandr Feldman, president of the Ukrainian Jewish Committee who is also a Party of Regions member of parliament.

In a scathing op-ed published in The Huffington Post, Feldman alleged that EuroMaidan has devolved from a movement about democracy to one of ultra-nationalism and anti-Semitism, due to Svoboda's involvement.

"Activists of the ultra-nationalist, anti-Semitic and grotesquely misnamed Svoboda (Freedom) soon came to the fore; giving the protests a progressively darker and more violent edge," he wrote.

The turning point, he says, was the toppling of the Lenin statue, a symbol to many of tyranny and oppression, but revered by Communists. But perhaps more frightening, he asserts, was the annual New Year's Day torchlight procession of some 15,000 nationalists that included thousands of Svoboda members in central Kyiv to celebrate the 105th anniversary of the birth of Stepan Bandera, a much misunderstood and highly controversial figure who headed the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

It arose after World War I with the goal of restoring Ukrainian independence that briefly existed in 1917-1921. Representing a people without a titular nation who were brutally oppressed by both the Soviets and Poles, some of its radical elements were accused of killing tens of thousands of Poles and Jews in the 1940s. Jews and other ethnic



Members of Ukraine's Communist Party protest a visit to Sevastopol by nationalist Svoboda party leader Oleh Tiahnybok (pictured on sign) in 2010. The sign reads: "Fascism in Sevastopol will not pass." (Ukrainian News)

groups also served in the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and many OUN members saved Jews.

Despite being the target of a heavy Soviet smear campaign that portrayed him as a Nazi collaborator, many Ukrainians deem Bandera a hero of the country's liberation movement.

He actually spent most of World War II as a Nazi prisoner, after his short-lived declaration of national independence in 1941. A Soviet KGB agent assassinated him in 1959. The Soviets also murdered his father in Kyiv, while his two brothers perished in a Nazi concentration camp.

Former President Viktor Yushchenko, during his term in office, posthumously gave Bandera the Hero of Ukraine award in 2010, only to watch a court annul it under Yanukovych in 2011.

Flying prominently above the march on New Year's Day were the blue-and-yellow Svoboda Party flags, but also the red-and-black "blood-and-soil" nationalist flags of decades past that have resurfaced in recent years. Both have been widely present during EuroMaidan protests, but the red-and-black flag is considered by some as a racist symbol and is banned for display at soccer games by the world soccer governing body.

While experts argue that it was Yanukovych's and his Party of Region's rise to power in 2010 that sparked the rise of Svoboda, leading to the party winning 36 seats in par-

liament in 2012, it might also be the far-right party's prominence now that shores up support for the president's re-election in 2015.

"People believed (in 2012) that Svoboda was the only party that can stop Yanukovych," said Taras Berezovets, a political consultant and director of Berta Communications. "But Svoboda's radicalism is something that scares the EU and keeps many would-be protesters away from EuroMaidan."

Some believe that collaborating with Svoboda party undermines the credibility of opposition leaders Yatsenyuk of Batkivschyna and Klitschko of UDAR. Both have worked closely with Tiahnybok since parliamentary elections, in an effort to garner enough support to oust Yanukovych next year. To salvage their remaining credibility and bolster their positions, they now "must denounce the neo-fascist drift of recent weeks and break off their alliance with Svoboda," Feldman says.

However, Olexiy Haran, a political science professor at National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, says that isn't necessary.

"There is a lot of misunderstanding surrounding Svoboda," he said. "(Svoboda) is not fascist like people say. But they are radical."

Kyiv Post editor Christopher J. Miller can be reached at millerjchristopher@ gmail.com.

Bandow: No big US stake in Ukraine

 \rightarrow 4 financial aid.

The second benefited consumers — including the heavy industries located in Donetsk and elsewhere which tend to support Yanukovych and his Party of the Regions. Noted the New York Times, the accord provides "Yanukovych an economic and political lifeline that will spare him for now from negotiations with the International Monetary Fund, Europe or the United States."

Brussels and Washington were shocked, shocked at this terrible act of coercion on Russia's part. New German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said: "It is utterly scandalous how Russia used Ukraine's economic plight for its own ends, also in order to prevent the signing of the association agreement with the EU."

The ever-bombastic Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona) visited Kyiv, where he announced that Russian "interference in the affairs of Ukraine is not acceptable to the United States." He complained that "Putin has pulled out all the stops to coerce, intimidate and threaten Ukraine away from Europe."

Western hypocrisy is breathtaking. After all, complained Nicolai Petro of the University of Rhode Island, the EU was "attempting to force Ukraine to choose Europe over Russia" rather than "adopting a strategy that would have

allowed Ukraine to capitalize on its close cultural, religious and economic ties with Russia."

The Europeans offered the prospect of economic gain through increased trade. After Kyiv said no European officials let slip that billions in grants and loans would have been forthcoming had Ukraine signed with the EU. Steinmeier criticized his European colleagues for not offering more, complaining that "we presented a financial and economic aid package that lay far

behind what was necessary to keep

Ukraine competitive and permanently

tie it economically to Europe."
Yanukovych doesn't have much credibility, but he still had a point when he observed: "I am categorically against anybody coming and teaching us how to live." It is up to the Ukrainian people to choose their future and they remain deeply divided.

A November poll found 45 percent wanted their government to sign the association agreement, 14 percent wanted to join the Customs Union, and 41 percent wanted neither or hadn't decided.

While Yanukovych is an unpleasant character, he was legitimately, if not cleanly, elected.

Yes, the West offers a better, freer path, which is why protests broke out over the government's abandonment of the EU. It's fair for Washington to wish Yanukovych's critics well and warn him against a violent response, but Western officials need to engage more than the English-speaking opposition activists who dominate Kyiv.

More fundamentally, why should Brussels or Washington meddle in Ukraine's decision? This isn't 2004 when the issue was ballot integrity. This is dissatisfaction with a policy decision within the normal competence of the government.

Yet Western officials and commentators act like they are confronting the reincarnation of Joseph Stalin.

Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland declared at an opposition rally

Ukraine spent centuries subject to Moscow and United States did not ice

in Kyiv: "The U.S. stands with you in your search for justice, for human dignity and security, for economic health, and the European future that you have chosen and deserve."

Washington should endorse justice and human dignity, which justifies support for honest elections and warnings against police brutality.

But Ukraine's "economic health," "European future," "turn toward Moscow" and reengagement "with the EU" aren't American values and are barely American interests. Indeed, they really aren't proper U.S. concerns. Alexander J. Motyl of Rutgers University in Newark, New Jersey, spoke of Washington and Brussels having "vital interests at stake in Ukraine." Only in Kyiv's dreams. To suggest that Ukraine is vital to global peace is beyond exaggeration.

A stable, democratic Ukraine would be good for all concerned — and America's Ukrainian diaspora deserves credit for its longstanding support for its homeland — but Kyiv's orientation isn't important to Washington. Ukraine spent centuries subject to Moscow and the U.S. never noticed. Putin wants to reestablish Russian influence, but that doesn't mean he can put the Soviet Humpty Dumpty back together. Today's protests in Kyiv demonstrate that Ukraine will never be a quiescent tool of Moscow.

The better strategy would be for the West to treat Russia with respect, acknowledging that it has legitimate interests in Ukraine, while using the prospect of greater economic opportunity to convince Kyiv to look westward. Yanukovych has been rented, not bought. Complained the Economist: "Mr. Yanukovych's favored option seems to be to preserve the status quo and refrain from joining either camp while continuing to milk both." This seems like a sound strategy from Ukraine's standpoint.

Ukraine matters, to Ukraine. It also matters to Russia, but less to Europe and much less to the U.S. If Kyiv wants to look east, so be it. The West is most likely to win influence if it makes itself more attractive, not if it treats the issue like a new Cold War. Despite Russia's money, Yanukovych's reelection prospects are weak and Ukraine is likely to eventually join the West. If not, however, so be it. The country never was the EU's or Washington's to lose.

Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C., specializing in foreign policy and civil liberties. His biography can be found here: http://www.cato.org/people/doug-bandow

On the move paid announcement



Lavrynovych & Partners is pleased to announce the expansion of labor practice, as one of the Firm's priorities. On January 13th, 2014 **OLENA SAPKO** joined Lavrynovych & Partners Law Firm as Counsel - Head of labor law practice.

Prior to joining the Firm, Olena had been working for 12 years in KPMG

in Ukraine, where, during the last 7

years, had held a position of a Manager of the tax and legal department leading the People Services Group. Also Olena had an experience working with PwC Ukraine.

Mrs Sapko has a significant experience in consulting on personal income tax, including taxation of personal income as well as salaries and bonuses, preparation of Ukrainian personal income tax returns for Ukrainian and foreign individuals, development of compensation systems, and on labor law compliance. Olena supervised HR audits and reviews of HR issues within due diligence projects of both Ukrainian and international companies. Olena Sapko graduated from Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University.



Lavrynovych & Partners is pleased to announce that **DMYTRO SAVCHUK** has been promoted to Firm's Senior Associate. Since January 1st, 2014 Dmytro is responsible for the legal work in the sphere of competition and antitrust, corporate and tax laws, as well as intellectual

Dmytro Savchuk joined Lavrynovych & Partners as an Associate in 2010. Dmytro is a qualified and experienced lawyer in international business structuring, Ukrainian and international taxation, competition law, intellectual property, and international trade. Dmytro has provided legal advice to companies in energy sector, agribusiness and food industry as well as to telecom companies. Dmytro Savchuk graduated from Vadym Hetman Kyiv National Economic University, and holds a Master of Laws degree (cum laude). Dmytro is a member of the Ukrainian Bar Association, actively participates in tax committee meetings of the American Chamber of Commerce and the European Business Association.

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'World of Warplanes' hits game market



BY DARYNA SHEVCHENKO

SHEVCHENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

A big three-story office building adorned with Christmas decorations at the edge of Kyiv's Podil district is the birth place for the follow-up to "World of Tanks," the video game called "World of Warplanes." Even the meeting room of Persha Studia, the Kyiv Wargaming developing studio, features impressive, new computers with giant screens.

The game is the second one in a series of extremely successful games, the first one being "World of Tanks," with some 75 million registered users worldwide. The third game, "World of Warships," is now under development.

"World of Warplanes" is catching up fast. Two months into its existence, it has 5 million registered users, of whom several hundred thousand are active players, according to Igronavty, a popular gaming TV show at QTV channel.

Both games are basically virtual simulations of a battlefield that allow the player to operate a tank or a warplane, and choose to play solo or in a team.

Wargaming spokesman Dmytro Bazylevych sits down at the computer to demonstrate just how it works. But the moment the game kicks off, his plane gets rammed by another player's jet. "Who was that?" Bazylevych cries out, and then goes into a rant about inexperienced players who spoil the fun by crashing into other players'

As the game begins, the player finds themselves in the sky, surrounded by enemy planes. Lightning-fast reactions are necessary to keep your plane in the air.

More difficult, however, was Wargaming's "World of Warplanes" entry into the gaming market.

Persha Studia started working with

Belarus-based Wargaming in 2010, when it got a contract to design French tanks models for "World of Tanks," which was then a year into its existence. Their virtual tanks turned out to be a hit and led to the Kyiv team being commissioned to design a follow-up to the "World of Tanks" game.

Development for that stretched over 2.5 years. In the meantime, the team swelled to 170 people, which included history consultants to ensure the planes were accurate copies of their reallife prototypes from the 1930s-1950s, the golden age of military aviation.

Historical accuracy is import- \rightarrow 13 Advertising: +380 44 591-7788 advertising@kyivpost.com | Editorial staff: +380 44 591-3344 kpnewsroom@gmail.com | Subscriptions: +380 44 591-7788 subscribe.kp@gmail.com

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Taking icy plunge on Ukrainian Epiphany

Each year on Jan. 19, when Orthodox Christians celebrate the Epiphany, thousands gather on both banks of the Dnipro River in Kyiv. On this holy day, believers say the river spiritually turns into Palestinian Jordan on the day when God appeared in three persons. That's why Ukrainians bravely dive into cold Dnipro waters, seeking health and happiness.

But Heorhiy Kovalenko, a spokesperson for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, says that swimming in cold, open water is more of a folk than church tradition. "For a Christian, the main thing should be praying in church, not plunging into a hole of the icy river water," Kovalenko said.

It is believed that the water on the day of Epiphany has special qualities and can cure diseases.

Otto Stoyko, chief physician of the Kyiv City Health Center, warned that there is a threat of further health deterioration in winter swimming. "I would recommend people who have hypertension, some chronic diseases or flu to avoid winter swimming," he said.

Roman Tymovchak, 68, president of the Kyiv Federation of Winter Swimming, has been practicing ice swimming for 40 years. He believes ice swimmers are healthier than ordinary people. Tymovchak recommends staying in the cold water for not longer than 15 seconds. Doing a short warm-up before diving and drinking hot tea afterwards are also vital parts of this ritual.

According to ethnographer Oleksiy Dolya, one of the most interesting water rituals that Ukrainians practice on Epiphany is cutting ice crosses and installing them near the river bank. The river water sanctification ceremony used to be quite interesting centuries ago, according to Dolya. During the ceremony, Ukrainians used to fire gunshots in the air, which symbolized the voice of God the Father, and to release doves into the sky to represent God the Holy Spirit.

Nowadays after the service, people take water from the river to sanctify their homes. Females wash their faces with it to enhance beauty.

"We call the Epiphany's evening meal a 'hungry kutya' (cereals and poppy seeds) because one, according to the tradition, cannot eat anything during the day of Jan. 18 until dinner," said Iryna Rakush, a confectioner from Kyiv. "I cook 12 dishes for this dinner. It is believed that the sooner \rightarrow 14

Some must-see concerts in 2014

BY OLGA RUDENKO

RUDENKO@KYIVPOST.COM

Buying concert tickets in advance is a good New Year's resolution to make. Use this guide to check the best concerts of 2014 and save the dates.

Garou Jan. 31

Pierre Garand, known as Garou, is not new to Ukrainian audience. The Canadian singer best known for his performance as Quasimodo in renowned Notre Dame de Paris musical has been including Kyiv in his tours regularly since 2008. While Garou released eight studio albums and has more than 100 songs in his repertoire, his main hit and every show's special feature is Belle, the title song of Notre Dame de Paris. There are no doubts that Garou will treat his audience with Belle this time, too.

Hr 350-2,500 Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylkivska St.)

Sarah Brightman

Another star of the musicals, Sarah Brightman is famous for her performance as Christine Daae in the original cast of "The Phantom of the Opera" in Broadway. On St. Valentine's Day, Brightman will give her first ever performance in Kyiv. Brightman has a large repertoire, which includes five albums recorded with Andrew Lloyd Webber, the author of "The Phantom of the Opera" and other renowned musicals.

Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylkivska St.)

Kitaro

Feb. 26

Kitaro is not widely known in Ukraine, and his concert this February will be his first ever performance here. Kitaro, 6o, is a New Age performer and composer, who composed music for a range of operas and movies, including Oliver Stone's "Heaven & Earth" (1993). His works won Grammy Awards and Golden Globe Awards.

Zhovtneviy Palace (1 Institutska St.)

Depeche Mode

Feb. 26
Depeche Mode hardly needs an introduction. In 33 years of its existence the band has put itself on the Olympus of electronic music. Their most famous hits are "Personal Jesus," "Strangelove" and, of course, "Enjoy the Silence." Last summer the band started its Delta Machine Tour and in its continuation will come to Ukraine this February.

Hr 690-1,490 International Exhibition Center (15 Brovarskiy Ave.)

Mireille Mathieu

March 6

At the age of 67, Mirelle
Mathieu continues performing her songs as
passionately as she did
decades ago. The french
diva, often called the
"Sparrow from Avignon,"
will not only perform her
original songs like "Une Vie
D'amour," but also the hits of another
famous French singer, legendary Edith
Piaf.

Hr 300-3,900

Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylkivska St.)

Thomas Anders

March 11
This show aims to please the nostalgic souls. Thomas Anders became one of the 1980s biggest pop stars performing in the famous Modern Talking dance-pop duo. Even though the duo split in 1987 Anders goes on with the recognizable Modern Talking style, performing dance hits. His usual show includes some of Modern Talking hits as well as his solo songs.

Hr 200-1,250 Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylkivska St.)

Thirty Seconds to Mars

March 12

Thirty Seconds to Mars comes to Ukraine for the second time after the performance in 2010. This American indie rock band became famous because of the personality of its vocalist and co-founder Jared Leto, who made a career as Hollywood actor before turning to rock music scene. After four albums and a number of world tours the band is finally known for their music rather than just the frontman. The band is quite popular in Ukraine and its fans are very dedicated.

Stereo Plaza (119 Chervonozoryaniy Ave.)

Alessandro Safina

March 18

forms a

range

Alessandro Safina performs in Ukraine so often that the posters with his face hardly ever leave the streets of Kyiv. This charming Italian operatic tenor combines opera and pop music. Safina per-

original songs, most popular being a hit single "Luna," and often treats his audience with local songs, like the Russian song song "Ochi Chernie" (Black Eyes). Hr 200-1,500

Palace Ukraine (103 Velyka Vasylkivska St.)

Gogol Bordello

March 21

Founded by Ukrainian-born Eugene Hutz, Gogol Bordello is not new to Ukraine. The band plays music of an original style that is most often called the Gypsy punk. The lyrics is usually a mixture of English, Gypsy, Spanish and Russian words, often pronounced with a deliberate accent.

Hr 380-1,400 Sentrum (16A Shota Rustaveli)

Aerosmith

May 21
The last but not the least, the living legend of American rock music gives its first ever concert in Ukraine this May. "I Don't Want To Miss a Thing," "Crazy," "Pink" are among the band's biggest hits. Aerosmith doesn't risk fitting its burning energy in the concert hall and will perform in NSC Olympiskiy stadium. This is a thing one doesn't want to miss.

Hr 490-1.090

NSC Olympiskiy (55 Chervonoarmiyska St.)

Nine Inch Nails

June 14

American industrial band, Nine Inch Nails is another newby at Kyiv stage. The band included Ukraine in the schedule of the "Tension 2014" tour that goes in support of the band's ninth album, "Hesitation Marks."

Hr 290-1.290

Stereo

Plaza



Successor to 'World of Tanks' hopes for a hit

 \rightarrow **12** ant to win the love of gamers, designers say.

"We had to start in a highly competitive environment, unlike the 'World of Tanks,' which was one of the first successfull free-to-play games in historically realistic settings," Oleg Gotynyan, the general manager of Persha Studia, explains.

Free-to-play, he explains, is a system that allows game installation for free and ensures that both paying and non-paying clients can play on equal parity.

A new player starts the game with a basic set of features — cheap planes that don't fly high and don't shoot well. But each victory earns vitrual money and experience, which allow the player to buy better planes. Those who want to get there quicker can pay real-life money for upgrades. The best plane one can get for real money is a level 5 plane that costs Hr 64.

Gotynyan says those who pay real money are in the minority. "We don't have statistics on 'World of Warplanes' yet, but out of 78 million registered users in "World of Tanks," only 25-30 percent pay real money," he said.

"I did pay Hr 20 once and I am still ashamed," says Oleksandr Ganzha, a 30-year-old TV engineer from Kyiv, a "World of Tanks" player who owns



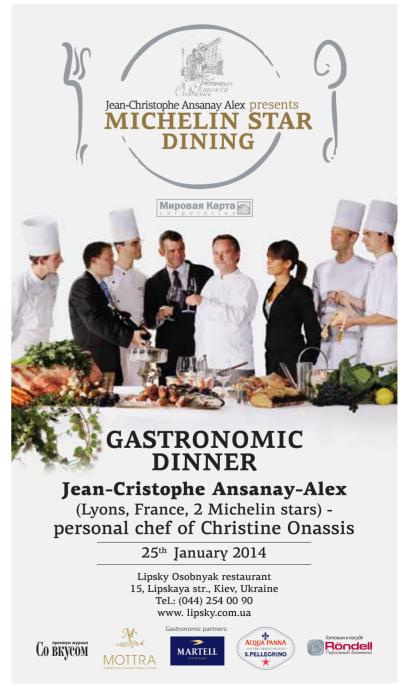
Ukrainian-produced "World of Warplanes" already has over five million users. (Courtesy)

two level 10 tanks. He also has a level 8 aircraft in "World of Warplanes."

Gotynyan says he worries that the players may find the "World of Warplanes" too difficult to figure out and will go back to the easier game, "World of Tanks." To keep players interested in the game, the company releases updates with new maps and control improvements every five weeks, Gotynyan asserted.

"The topic of aviation is much more complicated, but at the same time the gaming process is much more fun," Rostyslav Manko, the lead specialist of Igronavty TV show, says. "And several hundred thousand active players is quite a result for the beginning."

Kyiv Post staff writer Daryna Shevchenko can be reached at darynashevchenko1@gmail.com.





In "Love Me" (2013), Turkish citizen Cemal dives into the life of Kyiv, guided by his love interest Olexandra. (Courtesy)

Ukrainian-Turkish love story to hit the screens in February

BY OLGA RUDENKO

Things can turn funny when a foreigner is dropped into a completely alien culture. Maryna Yer Horbach, 32, took that idea, added an inter-ethnic love story and turned the concoction into a movie.

So, this February, "Love Me," a Ukrainian-Turkish produced movie, will hit the screens. It is a love story about a Ukrainian woman and Turkish man, mostly set in Kyiv, but with two scenes taking place in Turkey.

Horbach, a Kyiv-born film director who has been living in Istanbul since 2008, says she nursed the idea of making a movie based on a love story with a foreigner for the past seven years. When she married a Turkish citizen, the nationality of the foreigner character in the movie was no longer a question.

The film's protagonist, 34-year-old Olexandra, a Ukrainian beauty played by actress Victoria Spesivtseva, doesn't need to earn a living. She is a mistress of a rich Russian businessman, who generously takes care of her financial needs, but is far from a dream boyfriend. So when Olexandra meets Cemal, a tourist from Turkey visiting Kyiv for a weekend of fun, she goes out of her way to catch the opportunity for a real romance.

With a newly-found girlfriend, Cemal dives into the city life and discovers the striking differences between luxurious apartments on Pechersk and regular dwellings of the Troyeshchyna area. One of Cemal's adventures even takes him to the police station.

"The film includes the story of three generations — the main character, her mother and grandmother," says Horbach. "The generation of the heroine - my generation - grew up in constant soul-searching. This is not in the foreground in the movie, but it's still an important side of it."

The film cost Hr 14 million to produce, with half of this sum provided by the publicly financed Cinema Foundation of Ukraine, and the other half by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Horbach's husband and producer.

"Love Me" is expected to hit the screens in Kyiv in February. The movie has been screening in Turkey since October and received the Best Film award at FerFilm Festival in Kosovo.

City Life: Finding spiritual health in icy Dnipro waters

→ 12 one finishes their dinner the sooner they will get rid of problems the following year."

After the dinner is over, dishes and cutlery are left on the table for dead relatives to come to eat.

After the dinner families often visit their neighbors to sing shchedrivkas – traditional songs honoring family members and wishing them good fortune. The most famous Ukrainian shchedrivka is called "Shchedryk" and is widely known as the Carol of Bells.

For young and single women, the night of Jan. 18 is a night for fortune-telling. They often try to predict who their future husbands will be.

who their future husbands will be. "When I was 14, I took my mother's pan, put it under my bed for the whole night before Epiphany and spoke the following words: 'My betrothed, dressed-up, come to your mother-inlaw for pancakes,'" said marketing specialist Iryna Bondarchuk.

That night her mother had a dream featuring soldiers. "And 11 years later I got married to a military man," added Bondarchuk.

The Epiphany also marks the end of the Christmas holidays. "Late in the evening we take our Didukh (a sheaf of different grains, the symbol of the Christmas season) and burn it outside in the yard to signify the end of the holidays," Rakush said.

Kyiv Post staff writer can be reached at nathalia_trach@yahoo.co.uk.





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Chemonics International Inc. seeks highly-qualified Ukrainian professional for the following position on the USAID Fair, Accountable, Independent, and Responsible (FAIR) Judiciary Program in Ukraine:

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Please submit resume and cover letter in English to office@fair.org.ua by January 31, 2014, with the position in the subject line. No telephone inquiries, please. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

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