

Follow up questions for the webinar discussion, “Ukrainian Struggle Explained: The Maidan Revolution, Resistance to Military Intervention and Citizens’ Organizing.”

Delivered for the ICNC Academic Webinar Series on April 9, 2014 by:

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Question 1

How do you see people power revolutions cascading in other former Soviet states?

Answer 1

From: Dmytro Potekhin

Russian language capacity to train people in nonviolent resistance and strategic planning must be developed in Ukraine; trainings are done via NGOs, diaspora and refugee assistance groups; programs not only for activists, but also for journalists, donors and diplomats developed. With success of Ukraine`s reforms and introduction of visa free travel the Kremlin will get more problems projecting its power, and reintegration of Crimea and Donbass will become more likely, as well as democratic openings in other former / neo-Soviet states.

The Russian Black Sea Fleet must be removed from the Crimea - this is a sign of the neo-imperial status Putin is selling to his voters.

Question 2

Thanks for very interesting seminar. What was the demand at the beginning of the protest? Were the different groups united around a common demand?

Answer 2

From: Olga Onuch

The main demands (claims) made by the initial protesters (between November 21st – November 30th) were very much focused on the signing of the FTA and the Association Agreement with the EU. Protesters stated that they wanted a better economic ‘future’ for Ukraine, and they believed that the signing of the agreements with the EU would achieve this aim for Ukraine. Thus, even though the protest seemed to be sparked by a foreign policy issue, the protesters did seek a ‘better quality of life’ as their central claim targeting politicians. Stressing this one protester in Donetsk, explained that the Ukrainians protesting ‘want a European quality of life...a normal life...better economic future’. It seems that, at least initially, the protesters were in fact united in this respect. The central protest claims quickly expanded to include a demand for Yanukovich to step down – as the 180 degree shift in policy towards the EU was seen as a broken electoral promise (Yanukovich had supported these initiatives throughout his candidacy presidency).

After the November 30th violent repression of students and journalists in the Maidan, protest claims expanded to include demand for the protection of civic and human rights more broadly. The protesting population became very diverse and each sub-group had separate (or rather more specific) claims. These ranged from radical calls to overthrow the government through violent revolution and embracing nationalism, to calls for new elections and the prosecution of the militia and politicians responsible for the violence. After the second big wave of repressions in January 17th-25th and the third wave of state violence on February 18th and 19th, the claims became even more diverse. Yet, even in this late stage the majority of protesters were united in that they supported the demand for Yanukovich to step down and for new elections to be called.

Question 3

Why haven't there been more instances of civil resistance in Crimea post-Russian annexation?

Answer 3

From: Nataliya Gumenyuk

Occupation of the Crimea was a shock for the Crimeans. The main reasons for the shock are severe repression (torture, kidnapping, and detainment) of anybody who openly opposes the annexation, disregarding their nationality. The movement in the Crimea could be divided into those active in human rights before and a larger part of the society who was coming to the rallies since November 2013.

Since the beginning of the uprising a few of the most active and prominent activists were harassed. There were smear campaigns against them whereby their houses were marked as the houses of the traitors by so-called anti-Maidan (people affiliated with previous ruling party of the region, and then later Russian intelligence). After the Russian invasion dozens of top activists were blacklisted and forced to leave Crimea.

The problem was not just the Russian military but also criminal gangs affiliated with the new self-proclaimed government, as well as Cossacks from Russia who acted outside the legal system as a sort of "black squad."

Since the Ukrainian forces haven't been able to operate in the territory the danger has been extreme.

Right after the 'referendum' a witch hunt started. Since the imaginary enemy invented by the Kremlin doesn't exist, all the propaganda was targeted at the so-called 'fifth column' to which anybody opposing the occupation belongs.

Another reason for not showing any other resistance is economic pressure. For instance the idea not to accept Russian passports failed as people were told they would be fired from their jobs if they didn't have a Russian passport. Since the people opposing the regime aren't an organized, united group, the plan didn't work.

There are still very active groups like Crimea SOS and lots of other operating mainly outside of Crimea. Today their main activities are connected to helping refugees, people who're leaving the peninsula, working on new laws, and lobbying the Ukrainian government. Some of them are active in the East of Ukraine to warn the people about

possible threats. There are so many challenges that the activists made a decision to address the most burning issues.

I believe the time for the civil resistance in Crimea will come as soon as the society understands what had happened, while the active part would be able to address more issues.

Question 4

Why wasn't Euromaidan conducted entirely in a nonviolent fashion? Do you think the activities of the Right sector movement undermined the nonviolent nature of the Euromaidan movement? And some commentators indicate that Yanukovich was brought down by violence. If so, is the power that came through violence legitimate?

Answer 4

From: Olga Onuch & Nataliya Gumenyuk

Olga Onuch

First it should be made clear that: a) most activist leaders (with previous protest experience dating back to 2001) tried very hard to manage the protests and promote non-violent repertoires; and b) the majority of protesters did not engage in violent protest and did not employ violent repertoires. Yet, unfortunately a minority of protesters did employ radical repertoires and it is this group that received the majority of local and foreign press coverage.

This being said, there are three central reasons for the escalation of protest repertoires. The first is the escalation of violence by the state. In each instance that the state used repression, or escalated their use of violent repression, a group of protesters retaliated with escalated violent repertoires. The second key reason for the use of violent repertoires was, as explained by activists themselves, that some groups (such as those which composed the coalition of organizations and individuals what we now refer to as the Right Sector) saw the 2004 'Orange Revolution' as failure and attributed this failure to the reliance on non-violent protest repertoires. They held a belief (one fortified by the unprovoked November 30th repression of students and journalists) that a violent revolution was necessary to overthrow those in power. Lastly, the activist organizations were not united as in 2004, their coordination and cooperation was limited by their

relative lack of preparedness in 2013, they themselves did not expect mass protest to take place, the 'ordinary' people beat them to it. This fact made it easier for more radical groups to gain prominence and specifically certain leaders with loud emotive voices to attract followers. The lack of hierarchy and coordination between activist leaders, made it difficult to contain radical protesters.

While it is not correct to say that the use of violent repertoires completely undermined the EuroMaidan, it is clear that use of violent repertoires divided both, protesters and the broader population (be it supporters or opponents of the EuroMaidan).

While some commentators have concluded that violent protest led to the fleeing of Yanukovych, several political scientists agree that it was rather the diffusion of protest events to the regions and the use of extreme violence by the regime which was quickly followed by defections (private and public) within the Party of Regions coalition that led to the former President's downfall. Thus, while certainly a variable in the equation of 'what brought down Yanukovych?', it was still possible that Yanukovych could have entrenched, continued the fight and used even more force.

The political coalition that replaced Yanukovych, is all made up of elected officials and was at least initially supported by segments of the Party of Regions and related parties. This includes important PoR power players like Herman and Tyhipko. Once the president fled the country the correct constitutional procedures were enacted and parliamentarians voted in a legitimate manner to decide the immediate course the country would have to take until a presidential elections, scheduled for May 25th, could be held. Those who employed violent repertoires should not be entirely credited with the fall of Yanukovych.

Nataliya Gumenyuk

The concept of the Right Sector exists mostly in Russian and now foreign media, rather than having a base in reality. Before January 2014 they were unknown and only consisted of several hundred people, compared to millions of people supporting the movement around the country. The problem of the Ukrainian civil society was that it undermined the role of the media and propaganda and couldn't fit with the narrative that a tiny group of people demonized by the Russian media - and never taken seriously in Kyiv (as they were minor, one of thousands) - would become such a global phenomenon. Yet with every interview to the New York Times the Right Sector grew bigger and bigger. I should point out that it remains unclear what else the leaders of the

Right Sector do apart from making loud announcements tailored for the Russian TV. (Yet at the time when the Russian threat is a reality more people think about the necessity of having a strong army). It's true that the Right Sector was one of initiators of using Molotov cocktails in January 19th where the fist fight took place. But it became massive because a larger population joined. Partly, the responsibility of it is on the opposition, who didn't propose any new ideas after two months of the protests. The other reason of the use of the Molotov cocktails as a protection were the Dictatorship Laws. According to these broad laws, the opposition could be sent to prison for a huge variety of minor offenses, such as writing a controversial Facebook status. In this situation the general idea of law was broken as everything was illegal. While all that happened activists were chased in the streets by government affiliated thugs, kidnapped, and tortured. If we talk about February 18th, 19th, 20th, an absolute majority of the protests remained peaceful. Seemingly violent tactics such as burning tires and throwing stones were used as a self-defense strategy by the citizens.

And people who were using them do not often represent the Right Sector. As far as we know there is no one from the Right Sector amongst the victims.

The reason why the power was changed was the fact that the most of the Members of Parliament, government servants etc. understood that the killing of dozens of protesters by snipers was a point of no return. The core reason for the change of the constitution, and the fleeing of most of the key government figures, was a general uprising of the city and the idea that those who were responsible for such a mass murder couldn't be allowed run the country any longer.

The use of arms by the state was a reason for protest. Yet it became known that some of the protestors (we talk about dozens or maybe hundreds of millions) had arms but were not professionally trained in their use. Nevertheless, we saw that the victims of the snipers were those that remained unarmed.

Unfortunately only some parts of civil society openly condemned the use of weapons. Inside of Ukraine the situation was quite clear and people didn't find a reason to discuss what they did not see as important, especially compared to urgent challenges. After a few months a lot of people in Kyiv became aware that despite three month of peaceful Maidan protests and thousands of other activities, the image of the uprising was substituted with that of a few armed men. However it doesn't undermine the importance of a better self-discipline and less glorification of the self-defense activities, such as burning tires and throwing rocks.

Question 5

Ukraine needs community organizers from the Maidan movement to work with eastern and southern Ukraine. Is any organization taking on this work?

Answer 5

From: Nataliya Gumenyuk and Olena Tregub

Nataliya Gumenyuk

There are very many organizations in the East which are very active. For example, in the city of Luhansk there is a daily rally for the unity of the country. Also a lot of activities, such as helping the Ukrainian military, rallies, meetings, reaching the people who didn't yet understand the ideas of the Maidan take place in Donetsk.

The civil sector of Luhansk is one of the initiatives which has separate negotiations with those from the anti-Maidan movement who are ready to talk. I believe their work is not that visible because of the nature of the modern media which is more interested in showing a picture of the people with the guns. There are very many social networks groups coordinating their activities online, of which foreign media are not aware. They represent a large part of the society from human right activist to local businessmen. We can also see that the people who've been beaten or kidnapped by the armed pro-Kremlin (or Russian) forces are usually local activists.

Unfortunately the most outspoken have had to go into hiding as they were blacklisted. Yet another challenge is that the Russian propaganda was portraying the events in a way that anybody coming from outside the region would be portrayed as a 'foreign agent'. It forced a lot of activists from the rest of the country to restrain themselves from being actively participating in the east and south so they wouldn't be mislabeled. This forced them to find different ways of supporting the movement. Yet this provides a great chance to build a stronger civil society which has been traditionally suppressed in the east and in the south.

In light of this, the contact between the east and the rest of Ukraine has remained very strong.

Olena Tregub

Yes, indeed it is important for Maidan to reach out to eastern Ukraine to explain to them what Maidan was really about and to encourage them to support pro-democracy and anti-corruption efforts of activists of Maidan. Democratic Alliance - a political party of young activists - paid the most attention to the East of Ukraine, compared to other Maidan communities. They had an initiative, for example, whereby they went to the Donetsk railway station and invited people to come to Kyiv and join Maidan, explaining what Maidan stands for. It is important to mention that in every city of eastern and southern Ukraine there are local Euromaidan activists, in some places they are really small numbers, but they exist everywhere. Now, when we see those dramatic separatist/invasion events in the East, activists in Kyiv are divided about how to address this challenge.

There are 3 opinions. First, there is a sentiment that if the region of Donbas does not understand what the revolution was about in Kyiv and buys the nonsense of Russian propaganda, Ukraine should move ahead leaving Donbas residents behind. Many believe that Donbas is slowing down Ukraine's development as a democratic European country and it should be let go. Remember that the criminal Yanukovich came from Donbas - this also plays role in the fact that Ukrainians in western and central Ukraine have uneasy feelings about Donbas. The second group are demanding anti-terrorist operation against separatists; no negotiations with terrorists and Russian occupiers. The third group is trying to reach out to separatist-prone regions to understand why some locals support Russian occupation. Groups of activists (100 people) from Kyiv tried traveling to the East, but they were brutally stopped by the special police forces, beaten and robbed. More and more voices are now heard in Kyiv that people in Donbas wanted to have their own Maidan but they missed their chance earlier. Now, when there is a crisis engineered by other actors, they just joined it to express their dissatisfaction with their lives. They simply don't understand how to express themselves without supporting Russian invasion.

Question 6

Going forward, what are the roles of the diaspora? Ukrainians around the world who had hoped to contribute to Ukraine through their fields had previously faced the same corruption Ukrainian citizens had. I think people will find disappointment if we only

focus on building democratic institutions, which has been going on for some years already.

Answer 6

From: Olena Tregub

The diaspora all over the world showed incredible support to Euromaidan. It was stronger than during the Orange revolution. The diaspora sent money, medicine, even helmets and bullet-proof vests to Maidan. There were Euromaidan rallies in many major cities, now only in the West, but in Asia as well (e.g. in India). Diaspora activists found residences and companies owned by supporters of Yanukovich regime and protested in front of them. The diaspora also wrote letters, petitions to their governments, and held meetings with parliamentary representatives.

I don't think that there will be big disappointment after Euromaidan. It was a painful experience because of the loss of so many human lives. Now the civil society in Ukraine remains mobilized and is actively pushing for reforms that would make democratization of Ukraine irreversible. Maidan's main message was that the revolution was not about names of politicians, but to 'change the system'. Civil society understands that they themselves need to work to change this system, since no politician will do the job for them.

Question 7

The seizure of official buildings in Kyiv and in Donetsk and Kharkiv are both unconstitutional acts conducted by extremists that wish to destabilize the situation. So why was it considered acceptable to do it in Kyiv? Now they are calling the same action in the East as terrorist acts. Shouldn't both be condemned?

Answer 7

From: Dmytro Potekhin and Nataliya Gumenyuk

Dmytro Potekhin

The Yanukovich regime has not been legitimate since 2010 and had no right to keep the buildings and use other state resources. [For more details see here.](#)

The same applies for the attempts to take over the buildings in Donetsk and Kharkiv now. Violence and use of arms make it even less legitimate.

Nataliya Gumenyuk

Just one official building was occupied at the Maidan (on the 1st of December). It was the City Council, and it was taken without the use of arms. Occupiers gave employees in the building the option to continue working there or to leave. All of the people had access to their workspace and could take their belongings. Protestors were also invited to several other municipal buildings on the Maidan, including the trade union building, the Ukrainian house, and the October Palace. In the last three cases it could be considered a violation of private property as people stayed inside, but it was not a breach of the constitution. Although it should not be used as a justification to break the law, the reason behind the occupation of building in Kyiv was the need to have a place to sleep and stay during extremely cold weather. During four months of protest the weather in Kyiv was often -20 C.

In Luhansk, Slavyansk, and Kramatorsk the buildings were overtaken by heavily armed military men, which acted as a storm brigade. It is important to mention that the first buildings to be overtaken in these regions were those of the regional police and security service offices, and in a few cases (such as Krasny Lyman) the primary aim was to obtain access to weapons. As compared to the occupation of municipal buildings in Kyiv, the seizure of Security Service and Police buildings had more strategic importance, and the seizures clearly broke the Constitution.

When a regional government building was seized in Donetsk, there was very little outcry or condemnation. However, in this region, the type of occupation is of a very different nature; the buildings are guarded by heavily armed individuals who do not allow free passage to protesters or the media. Those who have been detained in the buildings say that they are used as an HQ for planning further military actions, rather than as a shelter for protesters. Furthermore, reports from Slavyansk/Luhansk say that hostages have been kept in those buildings.

Overall, Ukrainians are less worried about the act of peacefully occupying buildings as compared to physical threats of violence to residents and others opposing such actions.

It's interesting to mention that as of February security experts on Russia have predicted that the Kremlin plans to create a mirror picture of the protests to confuse the public. If we look at the barricades in Kyiv and the infrastructure of the Maidan one can find the practical use of each element. The barricades there were created to stop the crackdown on the Maidan by police. Barricades in Donetsk are clearly poorly constructed and serve no practical purpose, especially considering they are guarded by armed men. The point of these barricades is to present a "mirror picture" to try to lend some legitimacy to the protests. During the revolution in Kyiv in November – February, many people donated warm clothes to protesters who were on the square. To mirror this, people in Donetsk have been donating warm clothes to "protesters," despite the fact that these events took place in April, when the weather was much warmer and warm clothes were not necessary. This was done as a manipulative tactic for Russian propaganda, to show people that it was a "genuine" effort. There have also been reports of "protesters" being sent from villages in the region to stay in the tent city in Luhansk for publicity, only to return home in the evening after the cameras are gone. Again, this was done to make events in the south and east of the country look as similar as possible to events in Kyiv.

Question 8

How can Ukrainians resist Russian intervention to preserve the country's integrity and national unity without resorting to arms? How can they mobilize those that speak Russian in their country to feel included and proud of their Ukrainian nationality?

Answer 8

From: All

Nataliya Gumenyuk

For the clarification the division – which had been staged and orchestrated from the Kremlin since December – is not between Russian/Ukrainian speakers and even not between Russians and Ukrainians. (Yanukovich and now Putin were doing their best to stoke up tensions in the Donbass region, presumably hoping for a bloodbath to balance against the slaughter of protesters in Maidan, while exploiting cultural, economic, linguistic and even religious fissures in the afflicted area).

Still the half of Maidan was represented by Russian speakers and people in the East coming to the pro-unity rallies are Russian speakers as well, and they're proud of their country.

This genuine division is between the uninformed or those who believe in Russian and former government propaganda and those who do not. For instance some of the anti-Maidan protestors would stand against a 'jewish-nazi-gay-coup' which is a ridiculous formulation. Also in Crimea there are well-informed Russians who are supporting reforms in Kyiv. As also Ukrainians have strong cooperation with Russian opposition.

Yet a lot of people in the East came up to the streets because of their economic problems, which started years ago and became even worse during the last four years. The best tool to overcome the division are information and communication with them in order to explain the true nature of the protest and somehow confront propaganda. The common ground would be switching the agenda and talking about the common economic problems. This what the activists in Luhansk do.

We should think about practices which took place in Germany after World War Two when the population was told of how they were manipulated and the crimes of the regime were explained.

As to the use of force – it's extremely important to prevent any kidnapping and use of arms by those storm brigades who create disturbances in the East. The police, army and security forces are those with the mandate to use the force against the criminals. At the moment police have not been effective and in the case of violence do not protect civilians. The danger is if the impunity will go on, people might start to believe in the necessity of using weapon to protect themselves. Therefore civil society is extremely engaged in calling the police to do their job, e.g. protect populations from the Kremlin/pro-Kremlin agents, mercenaries and make a differentiation between the storm brigades and civilians who were called to oppose anything coming from Kyiv.

Dmytro Potehkin

Ukraine is still to be created as a viable and functional state. The 23 years of attempts to repaint the old Soviet institutions with the independency colors failed to create loyalty towards such a state among the neo-Soviets of the Donbass and Crimea. Their elites

retained control of the national decision-making and minds of the people by selling them the anti-Ukrainian myths of the past.

The current attempts to keep the territorial integrity is an attempt to remain dependent upon the neo-Soviet corrupt elites and practices, keep the unreformed security structures afloat and success of reforms of the rest of Ukraine dependent upon the readiness of the corrupt and violent ex-Yanukovich groups to agree. The armed way to do this makes these attempts of the official Kyiv even less legitimate.

The only way to get rid of these practices and elites is to deprive them of the ability to excuse their corruption and blame the rest of Ukraine and the West for everything. They must face their own voters in a nonviolent anti-corruption campaign. Only such a successful campaign can bring around legitimate representatives of the Donetsk and Crimean people. Their negotiations with the Kyiv authorities will make more sense if combined with the Eurointegration campaigning and policies.

Olga Onuch

This is an incredibly difficult question to answer. Many political analysts and policy makers are currently looking for exactly this answer. It should be noted that when one country directly attempts to comprise the territorial integrity of another country (in the case of Russian military actions in Crimea: invades and annexes a party of a country), it is difficult to argue against the use of direct defense strategies against such actions. While diplomacy and negotiations are the most desirable route, it is difficult to deal with a strong aggressive neighbor that funds and arms guerrilla groups (or worse) and seems bent on seeing further destabilization.

Keeping the above in mind, three tactics on behalf of activists could be helpful in preventing further escalation of violence. First, activists and journalists should seek to provide balanced information to entire population of the country, this means also acknowledging the failures of the protest movement and the use of violence. Second, activists and politicians should distance themselves from hostile groups that promote the use of violence and nationalism. Civic identity is very strong for the majority of Ukraine's citizens while ethnic and linguistic identity is not as strong. Third, activists should seek to meet with citizens (specifically in the east and south) who have different electoral and policy preferences to better understand their position and to better

understand the opposing point of view. The avoidance of an 'us' versus 'them' rhetoric is crucial to keep the country united.

At the policy level there are three issues that policy makers could keep in mind. When it comes to Ukrainian identity, most in the country see it as a common civic identity and thus, language – should not be further politicized at this time. Any language reforms should be left to when a new President and a new Parliament are elected later this year. Many political scientists have promoted federalism as a solution to the regional divide in Ukraine. The problem is that federalization to the oblast level could potentially create oligarchic fiefdoms, where certain oligarchs have complete political and economic control and rule through patronage. But on the other hand, decentralization (specifically of budgetary responsibilities) to the local/municipal or rayon level, and the promotion of local self-governance would be beneficial and would give citizens a chance at more direct involvement in and control over governance. Lastly, the use of both languages (at least for the time being) in public speeches, can help assure Russian speakers that the politicians in Kyiv represent them too.

Olena Tregub

Absolutely. There is a very clear understanding now in Ukraine's society that if they stay united and strong it will be difficult for Putin to achieve his goals in his covert war. There are a lot of flash mobs, rallies, and performances aimed to show the unity and patriotism of Ukrainians. Some are traditional rallies where people gather to wave Ukrainian flags and sing the national anthem, whereas others are more innovative, such as a flash mob orchestra performance at the Odessa farmers market ([click here to watch video](#)) or at the airports throughout the country. At the same time, nonviolent resistance ends up tragically for some activists. A peaceful protester in Donetsk who stood in the square for Ukraine was stabbed with a knife to death. After a peaceful pro-Ukrainian rally in the eastern city of Kharkiv participants were attacked on their way to the metro by pro-Russian thugs and severely beaten; one of them ending up in a coma. Another activist and local legislator from Gorlovka was speaking for a united Ukraine and wanted the Ukrainian flag to remain on the city council building. He was kidnapped, tortured and then drowned in the river. There was an activist in Crimea - a Tatar man who was nonviolently protesting against the occupation. He was kidnapped, tortured and killed. All those examples are not random as this is a systemic intimidation effort by pro-Russian forces to stop any resistance to occupation. Polls show that 80% of residents of Donbas don't want to join Russia or to separate from Ukraine, but we do

not see them rallying in mass numbers because one part of them is afraid, while another part is just indifferent.

Question 9

What civic groups were involved in Euromaidan, and how did their tactics and leadership differ, if at all? Please include a description of the role of Pravyi sector in the events after the Maidan.

Answer 9

From: Olga Onuch

There were many organizations involved in the coordination of the Maidan. While I am not able to provide an exhaustive list at this time, it is better to understand these 'organizations' as networks or tusovky (cliques) of activists that were, for the most part, active in several other civic and political protests in the past. The most talked about SMOs and loose orgs. were: Hromadskyi Sector, student committees, Samo Oborona, Opora, Chysto, Zhinocha Sotnya, Auto Maidan, Veterans groups, and the coalition of right wing groups that made up the Right Sector. Yet, the key difference of the EuroMaidan, and the real interesting story of recent mobilization in Ukraine, is the self-organization by 'ordinary' citizen that took place. A variety of volunteer, autonomous, and spontaneous groups were created by neighbors and concerned citizens in the months between November 2013 and March 2014. This 'self-organization' was instrumental to the EuroMaidan protests, but also made it difficult for political and activist leadership to coordinate and manage the protesters.

The 'Right Sector', was first the location (right corner of the Maidan Nezalezhnosity) where a broad range of organizations and individuals who were ready to coordinate the security and participate in the front lines of the protests would meet. This later turned into an umbrella name for a coalition of individuals from a variety of organizations (ONAUUNSO, Tryzub, Ukrainske Bratsvo etc.), and later turned into a loose organization and even later a political party. The importance of their participation in the EuroMaidan and their influence in the EuroMaidan, while important, should not be overstated. One thing is for certain a website that was active in February has been replaced with a professionalized party website and many of the documents linking at least one PS leader Dymytro Yarosh to other organizations and activities no longer exists or has been altered.

Question 10

Do you think the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) (CIA funded) helped overthrow the Ukrainian government twice, during the ""Orange Revolution"" and most recently during the Maidan Movement?

Answer 10

From: Olena Tregub

Of course not. First, because neither the NED nor the CIA was interested in overthrowing Ukraine's government. Second, they did not have enough influence in Ukraine - which was a Russia-dominated territory during the Yanukovich regime - to do so.

The Euromaidan revolution was a grassroots movement. Look at how the Obama administration is reluctant to get involved in Ukraine's crisis, even now, when the problem went far beyond Ukraine. Ukrainians who participated in the revolution or just morally supported it feel very frustrated about the USA and the West in general for not helping them in the most critical moments. The Yanukovich regime was not under enough Western pressure and Yanukovich escaped from Kyiv only because he was afraid of his own citizens, not because the USA made him do so.