

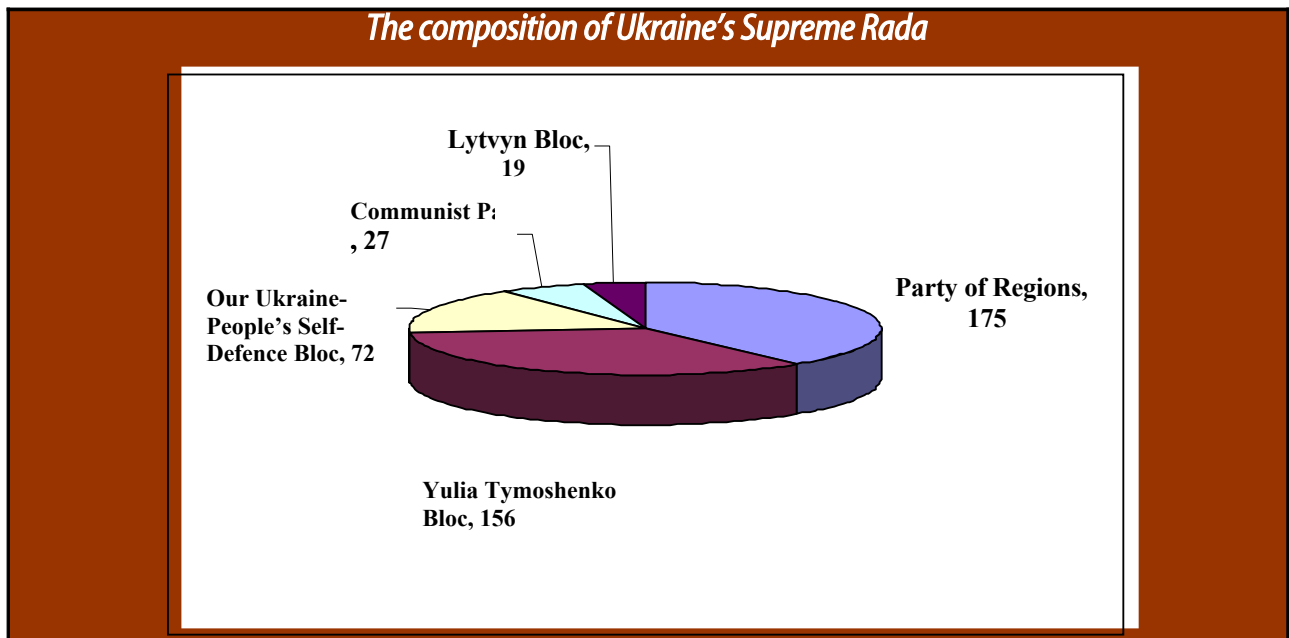
Russia has no need to attack Ukraine

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Russia's decision to use military force in Georgia fueled talks that such a scenario could repeat in Ukraine and Moldova. However, it appears that Russia will not need to make an appeal to force against Ukraine in order to preserve its influence there. Recent events in Ukrainian Parliament demonstrate that Kiev gradually forgets the ideals of the "Orange revolution"...

On the night of the September 3rd the paths of former "orange partners" – Block of Yulia Tymoshenko (BYT) and Our Ukraine – People's Self-defense (OU-PS) - diverged for good and all: in an extraordinary session OU-PS fraction decided to withdraw from coalition with BYT. The decision came after BYT together with Region's Party of V.Yanukovich on Tuesday (September 2nd) voted in favor of four bills considerably restricting Presidential powers and extending the authority of the Prime Minister (i.e. Y.Tymoshenko). Amendments to the legislation on the powers of Ministers' Cabinet have curtailed the power of the President: the obligation of the ruling coalition to subject a PM candidate to the President as well as to ensure the implementation of President's decrees has been removed together with President's right to attend the Government's sessions. The amendments also empower the PM to negotiate international treaties and to sign them, the Government has been enabled to pass decrees on its own account (without following the President's decrees) whereas the President lost its right to initiate governmental decrees. The bill on the Ukrainian Security Council has assigned the right to determine the structure of the council, the number of its members as well as to appoint its members from the President to the government. The competence to appoint regional heads of Security Council departments has been assigned to the chairman of the council. In other words, the control of Ukrainian Security Council moved from the President towards the government. Finally, the impeachment procedure which once used to be complicated has been substantially simplified in a bill "On Constitutional Court". On September 2 Ukrainian Parliament overrode President's veto on the bill "Concerning legislation "On temporary investigation commissions and temporary ad hoc commissions of the Supreme Rada". Namely this law simplifies the possibility for the Parliament to start an impeachment procedure: the establishment of a commission which would investigate president's actions which can be considered as state's betrayal would require only "a half plus one" of the MPs' votes. The mentioned bill was passed in Rada in March 2007. In April President V.Yushchenko vetoed the bill motivating that "some particular parts of the bill are unconstitutional". Now this veto has been overridden. Such amendments in Ukrainian legislation make the president into a symbolic figure with symbolic powers and transforms Ukrainian political system into parliamentary. For those who observe political tendencies in Ukraine such events did not come as a big surprise. Tension between BYT and OU-PS was constantly growing and knowing Y.Tymoshenko's ambitions to take over the governance of the country, her disagreement with the head of the state V.Yushchenko was "programmed".

We can remind that one of the V.Yushchenko's closest allies, head of his administration V.Baloga even accused Y.Tymoshenko of planning an attempt on his life.



It is noticeable that not all the parties belonging to the OU-PS coalition supported decision to leave the ruling coalition (Ukrainian People's Movement and representatives of "People's Self-defense" voted against withdrawal). Under the coalition agreement the coalition partners have 10 days to solve internal disagreements. Otherwise Rada will be given 30 days to agree on a new coalition. If such an agreement is not reached, President will have a right to dissolve the Parliament and announce early election. V.Yushchenko already declared that "power overturn is taking place in the country, the goal of the takeover is to establish dictatorship of the Prime Minister". In short, Ukraine is facing a new political crisis.

„Our Ukraine–People's Self-Defense” Bloc

- "Our Ukraine"
- People's Movement of Ukraine
- Ukrainian Republican Party Assembly
 - European Party of Ukraine
 - Ukrainian People's Party
 - Motherland Defenders Party
 - PORA
 - Christian Democratic Union
 - Forward, Ukraine!

Christian democratic Union and "Forward, Ukraine!" form the People's Self-Defense Block

Policy observers claim it is likely that the President, seeking to maintain power, will dissolve the Parliament. The withdrawal from the ruling coalition proves this insight. Struggle for power (namely for power and not for the chance to strengthen Ukrainian political and economic systems) remind us of combat movies with fights (which became common in Rada) and constant intrigue what is going to happen next. Although it is quite interesting to observe this from outside, these fight movies bring no good for Ukraine.

Russia wins without war

Assessing Ukraine as an object of influence which Russia and Western countries are struggling for, this constant state of uncertainty and chaos in Ukraine is obviously more favorable to Russia. Permanent conflicts and struggle for power do not leave legislators the time to pass internal reforms. Knowing that rule of law, fight against corruption and other indices are still tragic (in the context Ukrainian bid for EU membership), permanent political crisis reduces Kiev's "attraction" in the eyes of the Western countries. At the same time attempts of some EU countries (including Lithuania) to persuade Brussels that Ukraine is worth of European perspective are being stultified. Finally, energetic dependence of Ukraine on Russian gas: Ukrainian politics has long become a fighting field of oligarchs who made their pile from the same energy resources. This year Y. Tymoshenko herself forgot her "orange ideals" and went to Moscow to talk with V. Putin about the future energy prices to Ukraine. Many observers talked about Prime Minister's readiness to abandon Ukrainian pro-western course in exchange for Russia's support in the internal struggle for power. It is obvious that a chance to increase the popularity by lowering energy prices is extremely tempting. Y. Tymoshenko can use this chance by forgetting "orange ideals". In struggle for power there's no place for ideals.

Eventually on Thursday (September 4th) "Region's Party" registered a bill which submits the dismissal of current Minister of Foreign Affairs Vladimir Ogrzyzko. We remind that under the current legislation the right to appoint as well as to dismiss the Minister of Foreign Affairs lies within the competence of the President. In other words, Region's party challenged V. Yushchenko competences once again. And this challenge is mostly advantageous to Russia. If "Region's Party" succeeds in placing its candidate into the Minister's seat, if J. Tymoshenko succeeds in diminishing President's powers and if Ukraine keeps "drowning" in continual intrigues and election chaos, Ukrainian perspectives of western gravitation would considerably decline.

It is difficult to predict how this Ukrainian crisis is going to end. Ethnically divided, torn by the political leaders' conflicts Ukraine is on its straight way to another "colorful revolution". The worst is that such revolution (or even civil war) threatens not only democratization of Ukraine but also its territorial integrity. In the aftermath of Georgia conflict Crimea speaks louder about its break from Ukraine. In this context any serious internal conflict may become a pretext for Crimea to take actions and break from Kiev's control. If this is going to happen, security and stability in the whole region would face a huge threat.