



Kiev government wildly attacks foreign statesmen, scholars, activists

By Rachel Douglas

2 Aug.—The public in Australia and the G7 countries is told that Ukraine is a “democratic” country, locked in a fight with “authoritarian” Russia. But citizens of Ukraine can find their lives turned upside down or put in mortal danger at a moment’s notice, not only because of the ongoing armed combat, but on the say-so of the Kiev government.

We have reported the banning of 16 opposition political parties without due process (“Von der Leyen lied, saying Ukraine’s government chose ‘democracy’”, AAS, 6 July). Victor Medvedchuk of the Opposition Platform—For Life, the party with the second largest number of seats in Parliament, has been held in detention by the State Security Service (SBU) since his arrest in February on charges of intended collaboration with Russia. Former President Petro Poroshenko, who is no friend of Russia, was charged with “high treason” in December 2021 for arranging sales of coal from the breakaway regions of eastern Ukraine into the rest of the country. The *Kyiv Post* reported 21 July that President Volodymyr Zelensky has assumed the authority to cancel people’s citizenship by decree, and has used this power against ten people, including his one-time patron, the banking magnate Igor Kolomoysky.

Now the Kiev government has turned its practice of blacklisting people, against prominent foreign citizens.

On 14 July the Centre for Countering Disinformation (CCD), a unit under Ukraine’s National Security and Defence Council, posted on its website a list titled “Speakers who spread narratives consonant with Russian propaganda”. Included were former President of Brazil Lula, former NZ cabinet minister Matt Robson, seven current members of the European Parliament (MEP), US Senator Rand Paul, prominent scholars, and former intelligence and military officers now working as analysts and commentators.

Second on the list is Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the international Schiller Institute, followed by 30 people, both LaRouche movement members and guest speakers, who took part in this year’s series of online Schiller Institute conferences, dedicated to finding a solution to the crisis in Ukraine and preventing its blow-up into World War III.

The list itself is extremely primitive. Each person is listed with one or two lines, characterising their “pro-Russian narratives”. These range from paraphrases that distort things the person said, to statements that are not “pro-Russian”, but are well-documented facts, such as “NATO and the USA provoked Putin” and “Ukraine did not fulfill the Minsk Accords”, or sober analytical conclusions like “Russia is being pushed towards nuclear war”.

Several people named by the CCD warned, after hearing about the list, that it is a threat to their personal security. Scott Ritter, the former US Marine Corps intelligence officer and UN weapons inspector, wrote in a [letter addressed to his Congressmen](#), “Ukraine has a history of converting ‘blacklists’ of this nature into ‘kill lists’, where those who speak out against the policies of the Ukrainian government are being murdered or threatened with violence.”

Those concerns were accentuated by the remarks of CCD Acting Director Andriy Shapovalov when the list was

Matt Robson, former NZ minister, denounces Ukraine’s blacklist

The Honourable Matthew Robson, former New Zealand Minister of Disarmament and Arms Control and Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, appears on the Ukrainian government’s list of “Speakers who spread narratives consonant with Russian propaganda”. He provided the following statement on 1 August for publication in the Australian Alert Service.



Two recent interviews with Matt Robson can be viewed on the [Citizens Party YouTube channel](#).

I have been placed on a blacklist by the Ukrainian government, in the company of many prominent scholars and well-known public figures.

I am quite flattered to be in the company of such an eminent list of people with widely varying opinions on the nature of the war in the Ukraine.

But all of them are engaged in the time-honoured tradition of scholars and democratic societies of honest and open debate rather than the “group think” demanded by NATO governments.

The *New Zealand Bill of Rights Act*, Section 14, provides the following guarantee.

“Freedom of expression: Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and opinions of any kind in any form.”

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which New Zealand and, I presume, the Ukraine are signatories guarantees the same.

I am writing to the Prime Minister of New Zealand to ask her to take up with the government of the Ukraine this breach of my right, under both New Zealand and international law, to freely express my opinions, and my being on a list that endangers my safety.

released, to an “international round table on countering disinformation”. He stated that “people who deliberately spread disinformation are *information terrorists*” and that “information terrorists should know that they will have to answer to the law as *war criminals*” (emphasis added).

According to the CCD, that seminar was funded by the US State Department and CRDF Global Ukraine, a branch of the public-private Civilian Research and Development Foundation, set up in the early 1990s to influence events in the former Soviet Union, especially with regard to “science” issues. “Science” blends into the field of cyber security and cyber warfare. CRDF Global Ukraine is also funded by State, as well as the US Department of Defence and UK government agencies.

Responses from targeted people

Twenty-five people, participants in the Schiller Institute conferences as well as others named by the CCD, released

a “[Response to the Ukrainian black-listing](#)” 30 July. They wrote, “In times of war, publishing such a list is tantamount to targeting individuals. It is all the more unacceptable that the list agglomerates the names of many speakers, representing top institutions from around the globe, with diverse opinions, who are involved in a dialogue, searching to arrive at peace in the interest of all.”

Signatories to this statement included Zepp-LaRouche and several of her colleagues; Ray McGovern and Kirk Wiebe of Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS); former Virginia State Senator and Marine Col. Richard H. Black; Dr Clifford Kiracofe, former senior staff member for the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and president of the Washington Institute for Peace and Development; former Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force Lt.-Gen. Leonard Tricarico; and Pedro Rubio of Colombia, president of the Association of Officials of the General Accounting Office of the Republic.

Independent MEP Francesca Donato of Italy stated 26 July, “It is scandalous that a candidate country [Ukraine] for entry into the European Union places seven members of the European Parliament on a kind of proscription list”. According to an Adnkronos news agency report, Donato will ask EU Parliament President Roberta Metsola to demand that the Ukrainian government protect the freedom of expression for MEPs.

Scott Ritter’s letter to US Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Rep. Paul Tonko, his congressman, likewise emphasised the violation of “freedom of speech and a free press”. Ritter wrote that by funding the Ukrainian government through the *Additional Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2022*, the US government was facilitating Ukraine’s assault on his constitutionally guaranteed rights. He insisted that they act to make the Ukrainian government “immediately cease and desist in all activity designed to threaten and intimidate citizens of the United States.”

Matt Robson, in the letter printed with this article, addressed those points as well—the affront to the freedom of expression and the threat to personal safety, embodied in the CCD list.

In a 30 July online discussion, Ritter also pointed out that two of the Americans on the list are candidates for public office, making the Ukrainian list a (US-funded) act of foreign interference in American elections. One of the two is Diane Sare of the LaRouche Organisation, who is running against Schumer in New York.

David Pyne, a retired military officer and advisor to US Sen. Mike Lee, and currently deputy director of the EMP Task Force on National and Homeland Security (a group dedicated to the integrity of the US electrical grid), co-signed the Schiller Institute speakers’ statement and issued his own. Pyne pointed out that the CCD attacked representatives of the so-called “realist” grouping in national and global security debates, by including himself and Dr John Mearsheimer on the list. They are not “pro-Russian”, but oppose the policies of the “liberal political elites” and “neoconservative Republicans”, who are pushing the world into an ever greater danger of war. “Had the US and NATO not crossed Russia’s red line to include Ukraine as a ... strategic partner”, Pyne wrote, “Ukraine would be whole and free today”.

Eric Denécé of France, general director of the French Centre of Research and Intelligence (CF2R), a speaker at Schiller Institute conferences, posted a [joint “news note”](#) with his colleague Olivier Dujarin, who is also on the list. Former naval intelligence officer Denécé analysed the motives behind the “stupid and baseless” list, concluding that the Ukrainian authorities are acting like a start-up company seeking funds, using any and all arguments to get money from Western

donors, in order to continue the war. Kiev has every reason to try to silence voices who disagree with their narrative, he continued, in order to continue corrupt business operations in the arms trade. The French analysts cited the case of an Antonov-12 plane, registered in Ukraine, which crashed on 16 July in Greece, carrying a cargo of arms officially destined for Bangladesh. In addition, there is an unexplained high number of flights between Rzeszow air base in Poland, the main trans-shipment point for weapons to Ukraine, and Burgas air base in Bulgaria, a country not supplying weapons to Kiev; hence, Bulgaria may be a stop-over for weapons sold from Ukraine to farther abroad.

Remember the 77th Brigade?

Creation of the CCD was mandated by Zelensky’s presidential decree in March 2021 and officially launched in May of that year. Before it was even operational, however, head of the Office of the President Andriy Yermak made a presentation of “the work of the CCD” and “discussed opportunities for cooperation in information security, to a group of foreign ambassadors in Kiev: those of the G7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, USA), Finland, and Israel, as well as the heads of the EU and NATO missions in Ukraine.

The [account of this 6 Apr. 2021 event on the presidential website](#) reads more like a report to supervisors of the project, than a briefing on it. Yermak explained, it reported, that “the Centre has already started its work, develops communication between all government agencies, and plans to start coordination with foreign partners. ‘I hope that the Centre will become not only a Ukrainian centre for countering disinformation, but also an international one... I think that each country has its own negative experience of disinformation, which is spread by the Russian Federation’.”

Some readers may recall our report on the British Army’s 77th Brigade, specialising in cyber warfare, and the Institute for Statecraft (IfS) and its Integrity Initiative, under the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, designed for thought-policing the media (“[British Intelligence reactivates Empire’s tools for worldwide dirty tricks](#)”, AAS, 30 Jan. 2019). This year we reported on new, Feb. 2021 leaks by Anonymous hackers, which showed that back in 2014 IfS Director Col. Christopher Donnelly, retired from British military intelligence, was offering written advice to the Ukrainian regime, which had just been brought to power by a western-backed coup (“[Anti-Russia war propaganda is ‘Made in Britain’](#)”, AAS, 9 Mar. 2022).

It remains to be investigated, how closely the 77th Brigade and British MI6 (foreign intelligence) may be involved in the CCD and its blacklist/hitlist. In February of this year the UK, Poland and Ukraine formed a trilateral pact (part of London’s scheme for “latticing” the clout of Global Britain through smaller alliances, like AUKUS), to “improve cyber security, increase energy security, and counter disinformation”. CCD official Shapovalov met Polish security officials 15 June to discuss joint activities on information and disinformation.

Yermak, who oversaw the CCD launch, is a frequent visitor to London. He spoke at Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, in December 2019 and October 2020. On the 2020 visit, he was part of the delegation with President Zelensky, who signed a Ukraine-UK Strategic Partnership Agreement. The Ukrainian President met with the Duke of Cambridge, with then-PM Boris Johnson, and word leaked out that he also had a secret meeting with Richard Moore, chief of MI6. When the latter meeting was officially acknowledged after the leak, two agenda items were reported: the prospect of war with Russia, and the problem of “disinformation” and “fake news”.