

Conspiracy Theories About Controlling Democracies

What do a retired Egyptian general and The Guardian have in common? OK, many things, but what we have in mind today is that they both peddle anti-democratic conspiracy theories. The general in question, Sallah Al-Din Salim, recently **spoke** on a Lebanese TV channel and his words were recorded by **MEMRI**:

[The US] wants a collaborating [Iraqi] government and a collaborating national assembly, which it can later use to control Iraq, and build military bases, in order to distance Iraq from the Arab path and then to use Iraq's land to attack Iran.

So the United States is going to control voting in the Iraqi parliament. In a similar vein, Ian Traynor of the Guardian **writes** that a "US campaign [is] behind the turmoil in Kiev" in Ukraine:

With their websites and stickers, their pranks and slogans aimed at banishing widespread fear of a corrupt regime, the democracy guerrillas of the Ukrainian Pora youth movement have already notched up a famous victory - whatever the outcome of the dangerous stand-off in Kiev.

Funded and organised by the US government, deploying US consultancies, pollsters, diplomats, the two big American parties and US non-government organisations, the campaign was first used in Europe in Belgrade in 2000 to beat Slobodan Milosevic at the ballot box.

He then lists the many means that such organisations deployed to try to prevent electoral fraud and sway the election in favour of Viktor Yushchenko. All of this is rather admirable and does not amount to the US being behind Ukraine's electoral problems. However, the article gets even more ridiculous:

Officially, the US government spent \$41m (£21.7m) organising and funding the year-long operation to get rid of Milosevic from October 1999. In Ukraine, the figure is said to be around \$14m.

Let's just see if we understand this correctly. The US has supposedly delivered a victory to Yushchenko with an investment of only \$14m? This suggestion is ludicrous and insulting to the

Ukrainians. It is astronomically unlikely that a \$14m intervention could be the deciding factor in the race – and if it had been, why were the Americans not outbid by other interested parties like Mr Putin or the Ukrainian – er – parties? In reality, the incumbent Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich's attempts to **rig** the **vote** are behind Ukraine's electoral problems. No American organisation has attempted to rig the election and they are not behind the Ukraine's problems.

A world in which the United States can control the actions of parliaments and the votes of electorates exists only in the fevered imaginations of people like Egyptian ex-Generals and Guardian writers. If they have a penchant for writing fiction they should get it out of their system by writing a bad novel instead of inflicting it on people watching and reading the news.

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investment

The statement is indeed ridiculous taking into account official figures of what Yanukovich spend for his election campaign. Just to remind you - it is about \$600 mln.

by a reader on Tue, 12/07/2004 - 15:42 | [reply](#)

Conspiracism

Conspiracy theorists will always be with us--and always corrosive.

by [Dean Esmay](#) on Wed, 12/08/2004 - 05:22 | [reply](#)

devil's advocate

Maybe the conspiracy charges make sense if one stipulates that Yanukovich's side had calculated **very precisely**, given control of state media & plans for vote-stealing & whatnot, how much extra money (\$600 million, apparently) they'd have to spend on the campaign, and the extra infusion of \$14 million for the opposition screwed up their balance sheet **just enough** to throw a wrench in the works. :-)

by Blix on Wed, 12/08/2004 - 21:53 | [reply](#)

Re: devil's advocate

Yes. But if a person is capable of calculating the exact cost of a \$600 million public-relations project to an accuracy of less than \$14 million and being sure of getting it right, then they must be capable of foreseeing the effect of obvious (and, apparently, public!) sources of assistance for their opposition.

But what if the situation were this: *Both* sides employ Machiavellian operatives of this calibre. Both knew that the \$14m would make the difference, and both knew that if the other side matched it, the

bottomless coffers of the CIA would simply outbid them again.

by [David Deutsch](#) on Wed, 12/08/2004 - 22:19 | [reply](#)

no single opinion

It is ridiculous to speculate without facts about who gave money to whom. And I haven't seen any evidence of "Western money" in Ukraine. However, Yushenko did paid "salaries" to his supporters in Kiev! And food-supply was organised, and tents had been purchased in advance, and buses had been arranged just in time. And these facts are not speculations (however, they are not official). The reason I am sure is that my relatives who live in central Ukraine have a plant with many employees around 400 km from Kiev, and a certain number of workers took "a holiday", explaining later that they were offered an "allowance" of 40 Hrivna (about £4) per day not including free meal and a place in a tent if they agree to take "a trip" to the independence square in Kiev in a comfy bus. And they agreed to support what they called "birth of democracy in Ukraine".

So, a lot of money had been thrown in. We just don't know by whom.

Moreover, several years ago, they rehearsed this with a very similar scenario. Yushenko and Co again announced election results wrong and said that their supporters will stay in tents in Kiev until the true result are pronounced. It was VERY much similar to what happened this time but without enough resorces. Another difference was that eventually, police came and removed all the tents and arrested some members. That was about it. This time they just achived more. However, I doubt if that could be called a democratic shift of power. I wold call it a "technological process" rather.

And western countries should be ashamed of who they supported.

BBC news translated a footage from the independence square ("maidan nezalezhnosti") in Kiev on the second day of the first elections. It was nice to see that by failing to translate from Ukranian language can cause damage too. When Yushenko appeared on tribunes he was announced as a president of Ukraine. Half of Ukraine population laughed at this moment. To avoid confusions, I must point out that that was short after the FIRST election that indeed went totally wrong with a totally wrong number of votes.

But what it turned out to be afterwards is not 70% of votes in favor of him as it was purported by western mass-media. It he is not a prominent democrat at all.

So, the elections were not as clear as they seem.

by a reader on Thu, 01/13/2005 - 13:44 | [reply](#)
