

The Associated Press Smears Trump

By [Eric Zuesse](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In-depth Report: [U.S. Elections](#)

The Associated Press issued, on Wednesday August 17th, [a news story](#) of possible corruption implicating both the campaign manager of the Trump campaign (Paul Manafort) and the campaign manager of the Clinton campaign (Tony Podesta), but headlined their news report only with the Trump-campaign's connection, and included in the report's lead-sentence, mention of only the Trump campaign, and buried until the news report's 14th sentence, its first mention of the Clinton-campaign's connection in this reported affair.

Furthermore, the AP's 'news' article raised the question of whether a U.S. lobbying firms' "accepting money to advocate the interests of foreign governments — especially if those interests conflict with America's" is ethical, and it also implied (but did not assert this outright) that "those interests conflict with America's" interests in this particular case. However, the AP's 'news' writers provided no evidence that this "conflict with America's" interests was actually so — that there was actually any such "conflict." Only the hint of it was provided by the AP's 'news' writers.

The AP's article also avoided mentioning that the U.S. government overthrew, in [a bloody coup](#) which ended this lobbying campaign, the Ukrainian government that those lobbyists had been representing in Washington, and that that overthrown Ukrainian government actually constituted the "those interests" which the AP's article was implying to have been unethical for these lobbyists to have been representing.

Actually, that Ukrainian government was the democratically elected government of Ukraine at the time, and its leader Viktor Yanukovich, was, in fact, Ukraine's legally elected President at that time, and [the U.S. overthrow of Yanukovich was a violation of the Ukrainian Constitution](#). None of that essential information is mentioned in this AP 'news' article. And this information places into an entirely different light the question of whether this lobbying was unethical as the AP's report insinuates it to have been.

In fact, nothing is said in that 'news' article regarding any such [coup](#), and therefore no mention is made, either, about the possible unethical nature of America's coup in Ukraine, which took place in February 2014, but which [started to be prepared in the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine by no later than 1 March 2013, a year prior to the ultimate event, the bloody climax, the coup](#).

Hillary Clinton's friend and former top aide at the State Department, Victoria Nuland, masterminded the coup, and instructed the U.S. Ambassador in Kiev whom to have appointed to replace the man, Yanukovich, whom they would be overthrowing. Nuland told Ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt not to select Vitaly Klitchko (whom Pyatt evidently had been expecting her to name) nor Oleh Tyahnybok, but instead to select Arseniy Yatsenyuk. Here is that portion of [their conversation](#):

Nuland: Yats is the guy who's got the economic experience, the governing experience. He's the... what he needs is Klitsch and Tyahnybok on the outside. He needs to be talking to them four times a week, you know. I just think Klitsch going in... he's going to be at that level working for Yatseniuk, it's just not going to work.

Pyatt: Yeah, no, I think that's right. OK. Good.

That conversation occurred on 4 February 2014, and Yatsenyuk became officially appointed 22 days later, on February 26th. The coup itself climaxed during February 20-22. "Yats" promptly replaced Ukraine's top three generals with ones who would be committed to preparing Ukraine for war against ethnic Russians in Ukraine, and against Russia itself if Russia were to send troops in to protect them. The leading general, [Mikhail Koval, drew up a plan for ethnic cleansing of the residents in the most ethnically Russian areas of Ukraine's far eastern portion, called "Donbass."](#) Also at around that time, a TV station in Ukraine that had been set up with money from the U.S. Embassy, the Netherlands Embassy, and George Soros's International Renaissance Fund, [telecast](#) a journalist alleging that:

"Donbass, in general, is not simply a region in a very depressed condition, it has got a whole number of problems, the biggest of which is that it is severely overpopulated with people nobody has any use for. Trust me I know perfectly well what I am saying. If we take, for example, just the Donetsk oblast, there are approximately 4 million inhabitants, at least 1.5 million of which are superfluous. That's what I mean: we don't need to [try to] 'understand' Donbass, we need to understand Ukrainian national interests. Donbass must be exploited as a resource, which it is. I don't claim to have a quick solution recipe, but the most important thing that must be done — no matter how cruel it may sound — is that there is a certain category of people that must be exterminated."

Almost immediately after Yatsenyuk became the leader of Ukraine, he sacked the existing three Deputy Defense Ministers, [on March 5th](#). That's when he replaced them with the three rabidly anti-Russian neo-Nazis, who were committed to this bombing-policy. The new [Minister of Defense](#), Mikhail Koval, soon announced his intention [to ethnically cleanse from southeastern Ukraine the "subhumans" who voted for Yanukovych, who will "be resettled in other regions,"](#) meaning either Russia (if Russia accepted these Ukrainian refugees) or else concentration-camps inside Ukraine (and then perhaps death). "There will be a thorough filtration of people," he promised. (That English translation has since been taken down; so, instead, try [this](#) and [this](#).) Their property would be confiscated, and ["Land parcels will be given out for free to the servicemen of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and other military formations, as well as to the employees of Interior Ministry and the Security Service of Ukraine that are defending territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country in eastern and southeastern regions of Ukraine."](#) That's the euphemism for the ethnic cleansing, and mass-theft. In other words, Obama's rulers of Ukraine were offering their Ukrainian soldiers the opportunity to grab legally the property of their ethnic-Russian victims. Ukraine didn't have the money to pay for all the soldiers that would be needed to do this ethnic cleansing; so, these men were being promised war-booty, instead.

At least as soon as [22 April 2014](#), strong indications already existed that the populations in those areas were very worried about the rabidly racist statements coming from the new government in Kiev. These people also were worried by the new [government-run TV ads](#)

[comparing ethnic Russians with the type of beetles that farmers then were exterminating with insecticides.](#)

Koval's plan didn't go fully into effect before the Minsk agreements ended the bloodiest phase of the war. However, [enough of the ethnic cleansing was achieved so as to basically destroy Donbass.](#) Obama got rid of lots of the voters he didn't want to be in future Ukrainian elections. But he also lost both Crimea and Donbass. On 17 September 2014, Russia's President Vladimir Putin announced that Donbass, unlike Crimea before it, would not be allowed to become a part of Russia — Russia would assist the now-wrecked region, but would not absorb it into the Russian Federation. Obama and the West continued to say that "Russia is invading Ukraine."

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This AP article is extremely vague about what it is alleging, or who was behind the allegations, but it does provide several hints regarding whether its main sources were from the Trump campaign, or from the Clinton campaign, or both equally. One hint is: "Among those who described Manafort's and Gates's [the two named Trump operatives] relationship with the nonprofit are current and former employees of the Podesta Group." (More will also be quoted here subsequently, indicating that the Podesta Group are the main source of the AP's 'news' story.)

That "nonprofit" is described by the AP's report as follows:

"The nonprofit, the newly created European Centre for a Modern Ukraine, was governed by a board that initially included parliament members from Yanukovych's party. The nonprofit subsequently paid at least \$2.2 million to the lobbying firms to advocate positions generally in line with those of Yanukovych's government. That lobbying included downplaying the necessity of a congressional resolution meant to pressure the Ukrainian leader to release an imprisoned political rival."

The AP carefully avoids naming that prisoner, but it was [Yulia Tymoshenko, who was widely recognized by Ukrainians to be at least as corrupt as was Yanukovych, and whom Yanukovych had beaten in the latest, the 2010, Presidential election,](#) in which she had [received almost all of her votes from Ukraine's anti-Russian northwest, and Yanukovych had received almost all of his votes from Ukraine's pro-Russian southeast — including both Donbass and Crimea, the two regions that broke away from Ukraine](#) when Obama hired [fascist and nazi paramilitaries to overthrow Yanukovych.](#) When Yanukovych became President in 2010, he had Tymoshenko tried on corruption charges, which were widely thought by Ukrainians to be true, but which the U.S. government always claimed were trumped-up. She was declared guilty and imprisoned. She was set free immediately after the coup.

Manafort and Gates (if they were involved) were Republican lobbyists for the Yanukovych government, and Podesta Group (by its own testimony) was the Democratic one. In addition, Mercury LLC were apparently bipartisan lobbyists for the Yanukovych government, and all three of these firms (if Manafort and Gates were involved at all) were assigned to reduce (essentially, buy-off) the number of members of Congress who would vote on the U.S. bills to free Tymoshenko from prison. Also, federal agencies were being directly lobbied by one or more of these firms to stop pushing for Tymoshenko's release from prison.

In other words: Ukraine, even under Yanukovych, was already largely a U.S. client-state. Obama just wanted that to be total — an American colony (intended to be a new NATO member) on Russia's doorstep.

Obama's Victoria Nuland chose "Yats" to lead the interim government because Obama's hope was for Tymoshenko to become elected President in the first election after the coup. "Yats" was Tymoshenko's top political operative, and he wasn't in prison like Tymoshenko was; so, he was available to serve as an appropriate interim leader. The U.S. plan was for Tymoshenko to be released from prison at the coup, and then to run for the Presidency again, but this time without having to deal with [the voters in Donbass and Crimea, who loathed her](#): those voters would by the time of the first post-coup election, have been exterminated and/or become refugees in Russia. Obama wanted to have an elected post-coup regime that would remain in the American orbit.

During the coup [a massacre occurred, on February 20th, of uncounted numbers of Crimeans who opposed the overthrow](#), and Russia quickly came to the aid of Crimeans to enable them to hold a plebiscite on whether they wanted to remain as part of this new Ukraine or else return to Russia, of which Crimea had been a part until the Soviet dictator Khrushchev arbitrarily transferred Crimea to Ukraine in 1954. That plebiscite was held on March 16th (just weeks after the coup), and over 90% voted to return to being Russians. Then, the [U.S. White House's agents in Kiev planned and carried out](#) on 2 May 2014 [a massacre of over a hundred anti-coup demonstrators in the Odessa Trade Unions Building](#), Odessa being in Ukraine's south and just as much pro-Russian as was Crimea. That massacre was intended to create a widespread rebellion in the ethnic Russian areas, so as to provide a pretext for bombing there in order to get rid of as many anti-Tymoshenko voters as possible before the new Presidential election would be held, which took place on May 25th. The winner of that election was Petro Poroshenko, because he seemed to be less corrupt than Tymoshenko.

Obama failed to obtain the President he had wanted, and therefore Yatsenyuk remained in his post as Ukraine's #2, the Prime Minister, until his political support in the country reached well below 5% at the end of 2015, at which point, Poroshenko was able to force him out and replace him in 2016 with his own chief operative.

The AP article additionally says: "The nonprofit also paid \$1.07 million over roughly the same period to Mercury to lobby Congress. Among other issues, Mercury opposed congressional efforts to pressure Ukraine to release one of Yanukovych's political rivals from prison. One former Podesta employee, speaking on condition of anonymity because of a non-disclosure agreement, said Gates described the nonprofit's role in an April, 2012 meeting as supplying a source of money that could not be traced to the Ukrainian politicians who were paying him and Manafort. In separate interviews, three current and former Podesta employees said disagreements broke out within the [Podesta] firm over the arrangement, which at least one former employee considered obviously illegal. Podesta, who said the project was vetted by his firm's counsel, said he was unaware of any such disagreements."

Furthermore, the AP's reporters did manage to communicate a bit with Manafort's colleague Gates. However, buried in the report is the following, which raises serious question as to whether Manafort and Gates were actually involved in the lobbying activities of the "nonprofit" at all:

“The director of the European Centre, Ina Kirsch, told the AP her group never worked with Manafort or Gates and said the group hired the Washington lobbyists on its own. She said she had met with Manafort twice but said neither Manafort nor Gates played a role in its lobbying activities.”

All that the AP’s report states clearly is that: “The nonprofit subsequently paid at least \$2.2 million to the lobbying firms to advocate positions generally in line with those of Yanukovich’s government.” The phrase “the lobbying firms” there has no clear referent. But then the article, at a distance away from that passage in the story, does assert that “After being introduced to the lobbying firms, the European nonprofit paid the Podesta Group \$1.13 million between June 2012 and April 2014 to lobby Congress, the White House National Security Council, the State Department and other federal agencies, according to U.S. lobbying records. The nonprofit also paid \$1.07 million over roughly the same period to Mercury to lobby Congress.”

$\$1.13\text{M} + \$1.07\text{M} = \$2.2\text{M}$. So, all of that money went to only two of the three lobbying firms: Podesta Group, and Mercury LLC.

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In other words: the AP was here taking anonymous allegations from the lobbying firm headed by Clinton’s campaign manager, John Podesta, and creating from those anonymous Clinton-campaign sources a ‘news’ report that is cast (and headlined) as if it’s incriminating against the campaign manager of the Trump campaign. Yet, the ‘news’ report doesn’t even give any indication that Manafort and Gates received any money at all. And virtually all of the headlines that are likely to be published based upon and about that ‘news’ ‘report’ (except for this one) will probably be identifying Manafort and Gates as being the one firm that has some explaining to do — as if the AP’s team did any real explaining at all, instead of having done merely propaganda against Trump.

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They’re Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST’S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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Articles by: [Eric Zuesse](#)

About the author:

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