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Subject: Re: Ukraine

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 29 Sep 2023 17:10:29 GMT

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I was going to leave this thread lay, since I think we came to a good place to let it rest. But I did want to say one more thing, to clarify myself on the comments I made about gaslighting.

I am generally purposely non-specific about my thoughts and opinions on political matters and about the policies and laws of the United States for a variety of reasons. But I don't have any problems talking about the comments I've heard from private individuals and especially those in the media or certain so-called "influencers."

I've seen folks spinning the facts to a point that they are actually not facts anymore. These are textbook cases of gaslighting. They describe a version of "reality" that has distortions. It's most effective when there are plenty of true and demonstratable facts mixed in with the distortions, so maybe the audience doesn't notice the distortions and simply believes them. Even better if they cannot check the facts, or if it's inconvenient enough that they won't.

Not everyone does this, of course, and I've seen plenty of sources that are spot-on, or perhaps I should say they relay the situation in a way that makes sense and that fits with what I have observed over the years.

I don't intend to name those I've caught spinning the facts or outright lying. But I will say what makes me most sad is some of the gaslighters are actually people I agree with in many other respects. Sad to see those because that makes me check them off the list of reliable sources.

Let me give you one example, one of many. I won't get into the details too much and instead leave that to the reader to research if they are so inclined.

Look at the situation with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Most people in Ukraine are Orthodox or Jews. There are also some Moslems and other religions. Some are atheist or agnostic because of the Soviet years, but frankly, most people are not. Most are Orthodox Christian.

There's a problem there though. There's a schism that has formed in the church. In the not-so-distant past, I could have referred to the Eastern Orthodox or Russian Orthodox church and considered it to be the same thing as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. They were definitely cut from the same cloth, so to speak.

The history of that church actually has early ties to Kiev. St. Cyril's Monastery is in Kiev. So a big part of what was historically Russian actually started in Ukraine, certainly where the Orthodox Church is concerned.

The Orthodox Church doesn't have a pope, but the closest thing they have to that is called the patriarchate. At first, there was a Kyiv Patriarchate but that position was later moved to Moscow. That happened way back in the 1600s.

But now there's a problem. Some - probably most - in Ukraine do not think having their

patriarchate in Moscow makes sense, and in fact, they fear that the Moscow Church is biased and even puppets of Putin in some cases. So many do not recognize the authority of the Moscow patriarchate anymore. They have installed their own patriarchate in Kiev, considering him to be a restoration of the pre-1600s lineage.

You can see how complications can arise from this situation. Think about the days when the Pope and the Kings had power-struggles in Europe and you can understand the situation in the various factions of the Eastern Orthodox Church and the governments of former Soviet republics. It's a thorny situation.

So when I hear "influencers" in America talking about Ukrainian policies that somehow "violate the church" or discussing "ethics" related to the church - if I don't also hear a basic description of the history of the church and its complexities - it's self-evident that their editorial is a complete spin-job. They are trying to play upon people's emotions without describing the whole situation. They are trying to promote an agenda.

Even more sadly, at least to me, is that the people I hear doing this didn't need the sales pitch. They have valid concerns about problems here in America and could provide valid suggestions that don't involve Ukraine at all. They don't need to use Ukraine as a scapegoat for American problems and should instead focus on the real problems they are trying to solve. Their message is distorted, so of course their proposed solutions are distorted. They would be better off describing the actual problems, and talking about their proposed solutions.

Any person that tells a story with partial information - spinning it to paint a picture that is almost completely false - frustrates me because I know they are complete gaslighters, and especially when I also know that others might not identify the deception. Most Americans don't know the history of the Eastern Orthodox Church, so it's easy to sell them a lie. Even intelligent people can be swayed.

There's a ton of that here. I generally just tune it out. I don't need to waste my time listening to a flat-earther or any other kind of gaslighter. My hope is that others will see it too, and to increase their scrutiny of their information sources.