Elites Panic As Anti-War Populist Wins in NATO-Member Slovakia

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Glenn Greenwald (GG): What they're really worried about - and you've seen these concerns expressed in articles in Europe over the past several months - is that a lot of elections are coming up over the next six months in Europe. In Western Europe, Central Europe and Eastern Europe. And there are a lot of parties and a lot of leaders seeing that Europeans like Americans, are going against that war and they are now running on a platform opposing the war in Ukraine, of opposing further expenditures of national resources - weapons and money - to Ukraine. And they're petrified that this is going to start to happen like it happened with Afghanistan. And there are a lot of sleepless people right now inside the CIA, inside Western Intelligence Agencies and inside Kiev as a result of the election that just was held in Slovakia. Now, Slovakia is a small country. It's about 5 million people, but it's an extremely important country because it's situated right there in Central Europe. It was part of the Iron Curtain, the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War. It borders Ukraine. It's a country that was one of the first to stand up and say we will support Ukraine in the war against Russia. And they sent symbolic but still important weaponry and money to fuel the war in Ukraine. And yet the national election was held over the weekend and a former prime minister who won was identified as a leftist, ran a more populist campaign where he centralised, among other things, the vow to cut off all future funding and support for the war in Ukraine, for Ukraine, on the grounds that their country can't afford it, that they would rather spend money on the lives of the people of Slovakia, not to fuel the war in Ukraine. And he won. He won the election.

Here you see from AP on October 1st, the headline: A populist ex-premier who opposes support for Ukraine leads his leftist party to victory in Slovakia. Quote, "a populist former prime minister and his leftist party have won early parliamentary elections in Slovakia, staging a political comeback after campaigning on a", quote, "pro-Russian and anti-American message, according to complete results announced on Sunday. Former Prime Minister Robert Fico and the leftist Smer or Direction party had 22.9% of the votes or 42 seats in the 150-seat Parliament, the Slovak Statistics Office said. Public and exit polls predicted a tight race, but in the end, Fico won relatively big after his campaign - considered aggressive in the most

radical of his career - attracted voters who favoured the far-right." Note that this is a politician who was long considered not just to be on the liberal left, but to really be a leftist. And as has happened so much in our politics in the West, the standard left right dichotomies are breaking down. Is ending the war in Ukraine or opposing fuelling the proxy war in Ukraine and joining NATO a left wing or right wing position? It's very hard to say at this point. It's both, and it's neither. Because that's not really the relevant metric any longer. He also aligned himself with the views of Viktor Orban, who clearly is a right wing prime minister of Hungary when it came to the ability of the EU to interfere in the sovereignty of their country, to dictate to the population how they should feel on social issues, including LGBT issues. But at the same time, he advocated his long standing belief in and support for left liberal social programs. In other words, it was "Let's close the borders." There was a lot of anti-immigration sentiment that was part of his campaign. Let's close the borders. Let's stop sending our money to Ukraine and stop that war. That can escalate very easily and threaten our national security. And let's do more to take care of the people of Slovakia. It's kind of a nationalist, populist winning message. It's hard to say if it's left or right, but this is a politician long associated with the right, and yet he got right wing votes based on that platform. And one for that reason, according to the AP quote, "Saturday's election was a test for the small eastern European country's support for neighbouring Ukraine in its war with Russia and the win by Fico could strain a fragile unity in the EU and NATO. Fico, 59, has vowed to withdraw Slovakia's military support for Ukraine in Russia's war if his attempt to return to power succeeds. Quote, People in Slovakia have bigger problems than Ukraine, he said. The country of 5.5 million people created in 1993 following The Break-Up of Czechoslovakia has been a staunch supporter of Ukraine since Russia invaded last February, donating arms and opening the borders for refugees fleeing the war. Slovakia has delivered to Ukraine its fleet of Soviet-era MiG-29 fighter jets, the S-300 air defence system, helicopters, armoured vehicles and much needed equipment. In other countries, including Germany, France and Spain, populist parties sceptical of intervention in Ukraine also command significant support."

So you're seeing the rise of this messaging, which is why are we sending tens of billions of dollars, hundreds of billions of dollars, enormous amounts of expensive weaponry that we then need to replace, to fuel this horrific war in Ukraine that is not achieving any good? The front line hasn't moved in nine months, as we showed you last week. Huge numbers of young Ukrainian men are dying against their will, meaning they don't want to fight in this war. They're conscripts that are forced to do so. And the threat of escalation, as we're also about to show you, is most definitely greater than ever. And obviously, if you live in that region. Even though the escalation is very likely to be nuclear. You're going to be a little bit more nervous about the threat of escalation from this war as it goes on than you will if you live far away. And that's what a lot of these countries are now recognising, which is that people don't see the continuation of this war as important to them. In fact, they see it as threatening. AP goes on, quote, "many of these countries have national or regional elections coming up that could tip the balance of popular opinion away from Kiev and toward Moscow." Note how slimy

that formulation is. They keep saying pro-Russia, tipping popular opinion away from Kiev. The people of Slovakia are not pro-Russian. People who oppose fueling the war in Ukraine are not pro-Putin or pro-Kremlin any more than people who oppose the war in Iraq were pro-Saddam. Or the people who oppose the war in Libya are pro-Gaddafi. They're just people who don't want to keep fueling this war. Not because they love Russia, but because this war is disastrous and expensive and dangerous. AP goes on, quote, "another potential coalition partner, the ultranationalist Slovak National Party, a clear pro-Russian group, received 5.6% or 10 seats." Making it even more likely that Fico is now going to form the majority coalition in the parliament and become the prime minister. Now, there are two things that are happening as a result of this election. And again, you can look at Slovakia and dismiss it. It seems kind of boring. Let's go talk about the exciting things in the House with Kevin McCarthy or Jamaal Bowman pulling the fire alarm. But one reason it matters is because this is a NATO country and it's kind of a bellwether for what's happening all throughout the West, including here in the United States, in terms of public opinion on the war in Ukraine, finally. But also, it's important because the EU is now seizing on this to claim that the reason this bad outcome happened, meaning the outcome that they didn't want, the candidate they favoured didn't win. The candidate they dislike, won. It's not because the voters of Slovakia exercised their independent judgement and will. Of course not, that never happens when they lose. It's only a free and fair election when Western elites win. The reason they say it happened is because of Russian disinformation. That's an excuse for everything. We went last week through four different episodes, just last week alone, where Western elites blame Russian disinformation for everything from Justin Trudeau's standing up with Zelensky and applauding and cheering for a Nazi SS soldier to Niger and the people of that country expelling France from their country. It's not because they got tired of colonialism or French exploitation. It's because Russian disinformation tricked them into believing that they'd be better off without the French. Hillary Clinton, of course, blamed Russia and so did Fox News, blaming Russia and Russian disinformation for why so many Republicans and Americans are now against the war in Ukraine. So already they're seizing on this election to say, look, we warned you that the threat of Russian disinformation was real, that it could swing the outcome of elections. It just happened. And this proves even more that we need to gain a stronger stranglehold over the flow of information on the internet. It's being used like almost everything these days to justify greater and greater degrees of internet censorship.

Here, The New York Times, the day before that AP report on September 30th had a headline "What does a Russia-leaning party win in a EU nation mean for Ukraine?". There you see that same scummy formulation "a Russia-leaning party". They're not Russia-leaning, they're just anti-war. But The New York Times subheadline says, "In much of Europe, the election in Slovakia was seen as a bellwether of mainstream support for Ukraine in its war with Russia. But voters seem more concerned with pocketbook issues." As though those aren't related. Those are very related. The winning candidate tied the war in Ukraine and the fact that Slovakia is sending so many weapons and so much money to Ukraine, to the fact that they could be using that money at home instead. Quote, "Given Mr. Fico's vociferous opposition

to aiding the Ukrainians, the election was closely watched across Europe as an indicator of mainstream consensus on the war. Mr. Fico vowed during the campaign to, quote, not send a single cartridge of ammunition to Ukraine if elected and staked out increasingly pro-Russian views, a position amplified by a galaxy of small but influential Moscow friendly news media outlets in Slovakia and pro-Russian voices on social media." Do you think there were any pro-EU voices and CIA voices and pro-NATO voices involved in that election as well, perhaps? Do you think The New York Times might want to mention that? Quote, "the vice president of the European Union's executive arm in Brussels, Vera Jourova, a Czech politician responsible for digital policy, called last week on digital platforms like Facebook and TikTok to do more to blunt what she described as Russia's, quote, multi-million euro weapon of mass manipulation ahead of elections in Slovakia and in Poland in mid-October. The Slovak vote, she said, was a, quote, test case for Russia's ability to influence voters' choices through online disinformation."

Do you see what they're doing every time they don't get their way? Every time there's an election outcome, they just, like starting with Brexit and Trump's victory in 2016, which is what spawned this entire disinformation industry and censorship regime. Every time they don't get their way and their will isn't served, they say this proves the internet can't be free. They have an all purpose villain, Moscow, that they blame for everything. And they say that this endless flow of Russian disinformation, somehow Russia is fighting this existential war in Russia against every single Western power and more than holding its own, it occupies close to 20% of Ukrainian territory. And at the same time, Russia is controlling the outcome of every election in every Western country, driving public opinion all throughout the world. It's like the most omnipotent country in human history, Russia is. Even though it has an economy smaller than Italy's, they built it into this giant to keep you in fear, to keep populations in fear, to justify why they need unlimited power.

Now, as you might recall in the reference of the start of the show last week or maybe two weeks ago, we reported on a new study issued by the EU. It was commissioned by the EU, rather, but it was issued by an organisation claiming, of course, that their disinformation experts were funded by Pierre Omidyar. Needless to say, the entire disinformation industry is funded by three neoliberal billionaires, Pierre Omidyar, George Soros and Bill Gates. And this group was founded by Pierre Omidyar. And the purpose of the study was to claim - and they announced it through The Washington Post - that the failure of Twitter principally, but also Google and Facebook to censor insufficiently, is allowing the flow of Russian disinformation more than ever before. And the EU's real purpose in issuing the study was to first threaten Twitter, which they know is more unpopular because of Elon Musk, but also Facebook and Google. Now, look, we have this new law in our hands. There you see the show we did on the screen. It was from September 6th. We have this new law in our hands called the Digital Services Act. And it is one of the most powerful censorship laws in the world. And because we can prove that Russian disinformation is overflowing the Internet, because you're not censoring enough, we're going to start using this law with greater

aggression to force you to censor more and more. And they're using the example of what happened in Slovakia, the election outcome they lost as proof of how necessary it is that they do so.

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