

Communist Party Ousted From Ukraine Parliament

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The Verkhovna Rada paved the way for the Communist party's dissolution by amending its rules.

The Communist Party of Ukraine will cease to exist on Thursday, the speaker of Ukraine's parliament announced.

"We only have to tolerate this party for another day," Verkhovna Rada speaker Oleksandr Turchinov said on Wednesday in comments carried by online news portal Ostro.org.

Discussion of the Communist Party's dissolution began in earnest in May, after party leader Petro Simonenko said that if he were in charge of the country, he would immediately call back the troops from eastern Ukraine, referring to the military operations taking place there as acts of "war against the people," RIA Novosti reported.

Turchinov, who was serving at the time as acting president, then appealed to the Justice Ministry to request an investigation into the Communist Party's activities.

Russia's State Duma denounced the move at the time, viewing it as an attempt by the new

Kiev authorities to "force political and civil forces that do not agree with the path taken by the ultranationalist powers to shut up," according to RIA Novosti.

The Verkhovna Rada paved the way for the party's dissolution on Tuesday by amending its rules to vest the speaker of the house with power to dissolve the Communist Party. On Tuesday evening, President Petro Poroshenko signed a bill giving effect to the new regulations.

Turchinov's announcement was made on Wednesday morning amid heavy infighting.

Speaking before his fellow parliamentarians, Simonenko made a statement about Ukraine's security services having allegedly "destroyed" citizens for black-market organ transplants, Interfax reported, citing members of the nationalist Svoboda Party.

Svoboda Party members then accused Simonenko of disseminating false information, and endeavored to physically eject him from the parliament.

An all-out brawl promptly ensued.

Amid the chaos, Turchinov exercised his new powers to announce the party's impending dissolution, before calling for a 15-minute break so deputies could calm down. Following the news, all of the Communist Party members present at the time then reportedly walked out.

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