

Zelensky's Campaign Chief Visited US During April Trip Arranged By US Lobbyists - Reports

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The former campaign team of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky led by Ivan Bakanov, who is currently holding the post of acting head of the national Security Service traveled to the United States for the first time in April, just days before the runoff, as part of a visit that was arranged by US-based lobbying company Signal Group Consulting, Ukraine's theBabel media outlet reported on Wednesday.

Earlier, Zelensky denied that he had ever used the services of US lobbyists. On April 12, the US Department of Justice, however, published documents showing that Signal Group Consulting had been registered as a foreign agent.

According to the papers submitted by the firm, it acts in the interests of "foreign principal Volodymyr Zelensky - Servant of the People, through Marcus Cohen," with its main objective being to improve the former's image.

The papers also say that the firm's reward will be \$60,000 in return for organizing a series of meetings, introducing Zelensky to the US press and providing him with a "strategic US media and governmental affairs counsel.

Further citing the company's papers, the media outlet said that the small Ukrainian delegation visited the United States from April 15-17. The delegation reportedly visited the office of Congressman Brendan Boyle and met with former Senator Norman Coleman. Zelensky's team also visited a number of think tanks, such as the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Cato Institute.

The media outlet also noted that The National Interest magazine published an article by Doug Bandow, senior fellow at the Cato Institute, as early as April 18 that contained Bakanov's quotes.

Bandow has already confirmed that he met with Bakanov, who, according to the senior fellow, was accompanied by Signal Group Consulting employees during his visit to the think tank.