

<https://www.internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article3984>



Ukraine

# Between fascism and imperialist intervention

- Debate - 2022 - Ukraine -

Publication date: Thursday 23 April 2015

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## Statement of the Organization of Communists Internationalists of Greece – “Spartakos”, Greek section of the Fourth International, Athens, 04.03.2014

At the end of 2013 we witnessed many anti-governmental demonstrations in the capital of Ukraine, Kiev, and in other cities. The centre of this movement was the Square of Independence (Maidan) in Kiev and the central squares of other cities. The movement was against the government of Victor Yanukovych and his U-turn regarding the pro-EU policy after the political pressure of Russia. This movement, due to the pro-EU elements and the name of the square Maidan, took the name Euromaidan.

In the West, the media presented those demonstrations as a people's movement for freedom and stronger ties with the EU. There is no question that the government of Yanukovych was corrupted and unpopular after 3 years of imposed neoliberal policies. The main aim of most protesters was the fight against poverty, state corruption and oppression from Russian imperialism. The leadership of this movement was at the beginning in the hands of neoliberal right opposition, who falsely claimed that the stronger ties with the EU will bring democratisation. Later, the far right and the fascists groups took the leadership. As a consequence, the demands had not the slightest relation with the acute social problems in Ukraine.

## The demands and the political groups

The demand for "freedom", under the flag of EU, was directly related to the Ukrainian-EU commercial treaty, which is not going to solve the crisis. On the contrary, this type of deal is against the Ukrainian economy. The treaty stipulates lifting of tariffs and barriers for the EU products and will destroy the Ukrainian heavy industry. That is the reason why many oligarchs are in dilemma. Those who control the industry, which is located on the east side of the country are looking for stronger ties with Russia, but those who control the commercial trade, the agriculture and the telecommunications are pro-West. This division on the ranks of oligarchs is in constant mobility. The political parties that control the leadership of Euromaidan are pro-West, like the party "Motherland" of Yulia Tymoshenko, an oligarch herself and an ex-prime minister of the country. Tymoshenko was until recently in prison for corruption. The other party, UDAR ("Punch"), of the former boxer Vitali Klitschko, is considered to be a creation of the German Chancellor Merkel. The third party that played the main role in the events is the fascist . "Svoboda" ("Freedom") whose leader is Oleh Tyahnybok. "Svoboda" is in coalition with the new-born "Pravy-Sektor" ("Right Sector"). "Right Sector" is the main force of the violent events with the police, and is controlling the paramilitary groups of "self-defence" who use pistols and rifles. Their slogans, such as "Ukraine above all", "One race, one nation, one motherland", "Down with the Jewish-Moscovite mafia", eventually prevailed.

The reasons that enabled the fascists to assume the leadership of the massive social movement are the following: the absence of a strong left movement, the coalition of the Communist Party with the government that makes left look like an undemocratic force with a neoliberal agenda supporting Russian imperialism. At the same time, Tymoshenko and Klitschko were trying to compromise with Yanukovych. The far right appeared to be the only militant and uncompromising force. By the time Yanukovych tried to have an agreement with the opposition by giving away the position of prime minister it was too late. The fascist paramilitary groups were in control of the streets. After a week of clashes with at least 80 dead, Yanukovych escaped in helicopter. ? new transitional government took place, with Yatseniouk, Tymoshenko's "lieutenant", and fascists hold key positions, namely the vice prime minister, the prosecutor-general and the ministries of National Security and Defense, Anticorruption, Education, Agriculture, and Ecology.

# The "anti - Maidan" revolt in Crimea and in South and East regions, the Russian intervention

From the first days of the victory of the opposition, many monuments of Lenin were destroyed and a pogrom against the political enemies of the new regime took place. The fascists destroyed the central office of the Communist Party; they attacked the office of the left group "Borotba" ("Struggle") which didn't support the Yanukovych government. Left wing activists received death threats. Additionally, in line with the new law against ethnic movements, the government imposed restrictions on the Russian language and on the languages of ethnic minorities. They also introduced heavy media censorship. Because of the fascistic terrorism, the ethnic minority groups in the south and east regions reacted with an "against Maidan" social movement with pro - Russia rhetoric. This movement already assumed control in the areas of Crimea, Harkovo, Donetsk and other cities. The Russian Duma voted unanimously to support the intervention of the Russian army in order to protect the Russian speaking minority in Ukraine. The situation is very tense. The US, EU and NATO are supporting the pro-West government and they are threatening Russia. So far the military conflict is not between Russia and the West but an internal conflict in Ukraine with the participation of Russian troops. This development is particularly negative for all Ukrainians regardless of the outcome. Many Ukrainians hate the pro-West government and their fascists' alliances, but Putin is only interested in promoting Russian imperialist plans in the region. A possible outcome is the independence of Crimea and some eastern Ukrainian regions and the unification with Russia. The rest of the Ukraine will be under the total control of the fascist groups that overthrew Yanukovych and they parade like heroes in the streets of Kiev. Even if they don't wrest full control (have total autonomy) from old corrupted politicians like Timoshenko, they will strongly influence the governmental policy and with their "storm troops" they will violently crush any social criticism. As for the national question, the problems will not only remain unsolved, but will deteriorate, since large minority groups will be trapped on the "wrong side" of the border, in a similar way as we have seen in the former Yugoslavia.

## The Left

Left and anarchist groups in Ukraine are quite small. Notwithstanding this fact, since the beginning of the mobilizations they tried to influence the situation. Left trade unionist and activists of "Borotba" camped in the square and distributed leaflets. Unfortunately, they have been violently attacked by the fascists. Similarly, anarchists have been attacked and repelled from the centre of events. It is our duty to promote the internationalistic solidarity of the working class against all oligarchs (pro-West and pro-Russian), against USA, EU, and NATO. The Greek left should be on the side of the Ukrainian people and support the Ukrainian comrades:

â€¢ Against Russian military intervention and any imperialist intervention. Ukraine should not be a pawn in the geopolitical games of imperialists;

â€¢ Against the IMF financial assistance and its associated high social costs;

â€¢ Against nationalism and chauvinism. Workers, regardless of nationality, language, religion, and residence, have one and only enemy - the capitalists;

â€¢ Support the demands of ethnic and religious minorities of Ukraine, respect of their rights - including that of self-determination.

â€¢ Support common struggle of all workers in the east and in the west against the new far right government, the neo liberal agenda and the fascistic gangs of "Svoboda" and "Right Sector".

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â€¢ Against the participation of the Greek government in the imperialist plans of USA and EU.

The Ukrainian people have nothing to gain from western or Russian imperialism or from fascistic gangs or the corrupted group of Yanukovich. All the above are just trying to exploit the Ukrainian people. Only the united working class and the class struggle can provide a solution to the problems of the Ukrainian people.