

US imperialism and the anti-Semitic leaflet in Donetsk

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US outrage at a vile anti-Semitic leaflet circulating in the eastern Ukrainian city of Donetsk, demanding that all Jews register with local pro-Russian authorities, is a hypocritical fraud. US officials have seized on the leaflet, whose authorship is totally unclear and which stinks of a provocation to smear protesters hostile to the US-backed Ukrainian regime in Kiev, to denounce protesters and posture as opponents of anti-Semitism.

At talks between US, European, Ukrainian and Russian officials in Geneva, US Secretary of State John Kerry said: “In the year 2014, after all the miles traveled in the journey of history, this is not just intolerable, it’s grotesque ... beyond unacceptable.”

What hypocrisy! In the February putsch that toppled Ukraine’s government, Washington and its European allies worked directly with fascists, including the Right Sector militia and the Svoboda party. These forces—which hail the World War II-era Ukrainian fascists led by Stepan Bandera, who collaborated with the Nazis as they carried out the mass murder of Jews in Ukraine—now occupy top positions in the unelected, pro-Western puppet regime in Kiev.

Kerry was cynically seizing upon the leaflet to improve the US position in talks with Russia, by distracting from popular anger with the Kiev puppet regime’s ties to fascism and providing ammunition for hysterical attacks on Moscow.

US officials ignored the multiple signs that the document is a crude forgery. The leaflet—bearing the name of the pro-Russian Donetsk People’s Republic, which is occupying local government buildings in Donetsk, and signed by its leader, Denis Pushilin—was reported on Wednesday in Israeli media.

It begins, “Dear Ukrainian citizens of Jewish nationality, due to the fact that the leaders of the Jewish community support the Bandera junta and oppose the

pro-Slavic People’s Republic of Donetsk, [we have] decided that all citizens of Jewish descent, over 16 years of age and residing within the republic’s territory are required to report to the Commissioner for Nationalities in the Donetsk Regional Administration building and register.”

It demands that Jewish citizens provide extensive documentation as to their property holdings and religion and pay a \$50 fee to officials in Room 514 of the local government building occupied by the pro-Russian protesters. Otherwise, the leaflet said, they would face deportation.

The initial Israeli media reports made clear the highly dubious character of the leaflet. They cited Pushilin’s denials that his group had issued it, as well as broader doubts as to its authenticity. Alex Tenzer, a director of the National Association of Immigrants from the Former USSR in Israel, said: “It’s hard to tell whether the leaflet is valid or simply a provocation.”

Olga Reznikova, who sent YNet a copy of the document from Donetsk, said: “I do not intend to register. I am 32, I have lived in Donetsk my entire life, and have never had to deal with anti-Semitism until I laid eyes on this piece of paper. Though I take it very seriously, I am uncertain of its authenticity.”

Reporters for the *New York Times* who visited Room 514 of the Donetsk local government building on Thursday found it empty. They spoke to protesters who said the leaflet was a trick of the Kiev regime to discredit them. “We are laughing; this is propaganda,” one said.

As Western officials and media prepared for the Geneva talks, however, they baldly attributed the leaflet to pro-Russian groups. Ignoring continuing reports from Donetsk challenging the authenticity of the leaflet, they speculated that it could harm the pro-

Russian forces and “change the narrative” about Ukraine—that is, undermine the credibility of anti-Kiev protesters.

Britain’s *Daily Telegraph* wrote: “A shocking story coming out of Ukraine: pro-Russian separatists in the eastern part of the country are accused of asking Jewish citizens to register their identity or face deportation ... It could change the narrative of the conflict yet again: the Russian separatism becomes a call not for self-determination, but outright bigotry informed by a desire for racial purity and Orthodox chauvinism.”

Kerry’s denunciations of the Donetsk protesters over the leaflet were echoed by other US diplomats. “Everything we’re hearing suggests this is the real deal, and that it is coming from someone on the ground there among these radical groups,” US Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt told CNN, “either to stir fear or to create provocation justifying further violence.”

Reporting from Donetsk, however, CNN’s Nick Paton Walsh called the leaflet “by all accounts an isolated incident.” Referring to protesters and the Jewish community in Donetsk, he added, “All sides are really trying to calm this down. Bizarrely, really, it’s the US State Department focusing specifically on this allegation.”

This comment from CNN, which can hardly be accused of having a critical attitude towards US foreign policy, gives a far better idea than Kerry’s hypocritical statements about the political origins of the anti-Semitic leaflet. The US State Department, Kiev, and their collaborators in Europe know more about it, one may safely assume, than Moscow or the protesters in Donetsk.



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