New Anti-capitalist Party calls for escalating intervention in Ukraine

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11 March 2015

After its statement hailing Greece's Syriza government as it surrendered to the European Union's austerity diktat, France's pseudo-left New Anti-capitalist Party (NPA) has posted another statement, this time advocating military intervention in Ukraine led by the UN and directed against Russia.

Once again, the statement is published fraudulently under the name of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), which publishes the *World Socialist Web Site*. One must stress the warning repeatedly made by the ICFI: only statements posted on the WSWS speak for the ICFI.

The NPA's current statement, titled "Fourth International statement on Ukraine," declares: "We support all efforts for a cease-fire under international control to guarantee it against all military offensives. Deployment of UN peacekeepers from third countries not involved in this conflict could be required."

The NPA's attempt to dress up plans for imperialist intervention in Ukraine as a UN peacekeeping operation is a cynical fraud. Its hypothetical "UN peacekeepers" would occupy eastern Ukraine, directly threatening the border with Russia. If these troops were truly to hold the region against "all military offensives," they would have to be able to deter and if necessary defeat an offensive by the Russian army. That is, they would have to have the support of NATO and, in case of war, principally of NATO's nuclear forces.

The use of UN "peacekeepers" has become a standard mechanism for enforcing imperialist interests in various parts of the world, including in Haiti, Bosnia and many countries in the African continent.

Such an escalation of the conflict between NATO and Russian-backed forces would pose the danger of world war, a danger that has been recognized even by bourgeois politicians. As he flew to Minsk last month for ceasefire talks designed to save the Kiev regime from a further defeat, French President François Hollande warned that the NATO powers could find themselves in a "total war" with Russia.

The NPA recklessly presses ahead, however, branding Russia as the aggressor and passing over in total silence NATO's role in provoking the war, by backing a fascist-led putsch in Kiev, with comments that are indistinguishable from CIA propaganda.

The NPA writes, "Fearing a Russian social and political movement like Maidan, Putin has described the post-Yanukovych regime in Kiev as dominated by anti-Russian fascists, distorting reality in order to legitimate his annexation of Crimea and the so-called need to 'protect' Russophone populations. While 'Ukrainians' were often identified with 'fascists,' the 'hybrid war' instrumentalized by Moscow in eastern Ukraine to destabilize the country's turn towards Western institutions has transformed political life in Ukraine."

This is a shameless cover-up of Western imperialism's intervention in Ukraine and its reliance on fascist proxies. The NPA's affiliates supported and in fact participated in a putsch in February 2014, publicly backed by US and European officials who traveled to Kiev. The coup was led by fascist militias such as the Right Sector and brought a violently right-wing regime to power.

The NPA's denials that anti-Russian fascists led the Western-backed putsch in Kiev are flat-out lies, contradicting even the NPA's own accounts last year from within the right-wing protests on Kiev's Independence Square (Maidan).

Last year, Ilya Budraitskis of the pseudo-left Russian Socialist Movement (RSM) hailed the role of the pro-

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Nazi Right Sector in leading the putsch. He wrote, “Without the ultra-right proponents of a ‘national dictatorship’ from the Right Sector, there would never have been any barricades on Hrushevskoho or occupied ministries turned into ‘headquarters of the revolution.’ There would not be, full stop, any of the events that actually prevented the consolidation of a ‘party of order’ and the establishment of a ‘state of emergency’ from above.”

In fact, the Right Sector, having defeated the Berkut riot police of pro-Russian Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, was soon integrated into the US-backed regime in Kiev. One of the three ruling parties was the Svoboda Party, whose infamous anti-Russian views were formally condemned by a resolution passed by the European Parliament in 2012.

The NPA’s presentation of Russia’s annexation of Crimea as an act of conquest is yet another lie. In regions of Ukraine with either a majority of Russians, like Crimea, or a large minority, such as eastern Ukraine, people reacted to the putsch by refusing to recognize the Kiev regime. Civil war broke out as Kiev sent a few army units supplemented by fascist shock troops, such as the Right Sector or the Aidar Battalion, to drown this popular opposition in blood.

The NPA’s support for an imperialist policy threatening the outbreak of world war brands it as an implacable enemy of the working class.

The NPA statement further declares: “We don’t recognize any ‘historical’ right of Russia to control or dismantle Ukraine…Neither do we recognize any legitimacy in NATO’s expansion after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991 nor to any kind of Western imperialist attempts and means to dominate Ukrainian political choices. But it is the past experience of Great Russian policies, the repressive nature of Putin’s regime, the war in Donbass and the annexation of Crimea that have reinforced NATO’s legitimacy amongst a growing part of the Ukrainian population.”

This is cynical phrasemongering to justify the NPA’s support for the imperialist operations in Ukraine. The NPA’s claim that NATO has legitimacy with Ukrainian workers after backing the right-wing putsch on the Maidan is a flagrant lie. The Kiev regime faces escalating protests against its cuts to industrial and consumer subsidies, its moves to privatize basic public services, and its attempt to draft tens of thousands of Ukrainians to fight in the east. The response of the population, according to local west Ukrainian authorities, has been widespread draft dodging.

The NPA’s refusal to “recognize any legitimacy in NATO’s expansion” into eastern Europe after the Stalinist dissolution of the USSR is a deceitful evasion. The NPA is simply refusing to say where its loyalties lie. In fact, it is tacitly backing the far-right forces involved in the Kiev putsch and doing everything it can to support NATO’s puppet regime in Ukraine.

There is undoubtedly opposition in Ukraine and across Eastern Europe to the Russian nationalism of the Putin regime, and before it of the Soviet bureaucracy from which the Russian business oligarchy emerged after the restoration of capitalism in the USSR in 1991. However, the NPA appeals to it on a right-wing basis. It opposes unifying the European working class in an international struggle against both the NATO powers and Russian oligarchy, instead inflaming far-right nationalism in the smaller powers in order to exploit them as proxies of imperialism against Russia.

The NPA’s attitude to the post-Soviet capitalist oligarchy in Russia and the Putin regime is reactionary. They make no criticisms of the restoration of capitalism in the USSR in 1991, and wholeheartedly endorse the Kiev regime’s anti-democratic policies in the former Soviet republic of Ukraine. What they cannot tolerate about the Russian regime is not its capitalist character, but the fact that it poses an obstacle to imperialist foreign policy, which the NPA is prepared to support even at the risk of threatening a global conflagration.

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