

Ukrainian regime rehabilitates Nazi collaborationists, bans communism

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16 April 2015

On April 9, the NATO-backed regime in Ukraine passed laws rehabilitating Nazi collaborationist forces that carried out ethnic mass murder during World War II, while banning all communist symbols in Ukraine, a former Soviet republic.

The law, titled “On the legal status and commemoration of 20th century fighters for Ukrainian independence,” officially legitimizes dozens of nationalist groups, including the Nazi-collaborationist Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA). It requires that state and local governments provide social benefits to members of these organizations and to their families.

The law also makes any public criticism of organizations on this list a criminal offense, stating: “Public denunciation of the role of OUN-UPA in restoring the independence of Ukraine is illegal.”

Similarly, the Kiev regime approved legislating moving “Defender of Ukraine Day” from February 23 to October 14. The February 23 holiday originated from a Soviet holiday marking the founding of the Red Army after the October Revolution—when it fought off military intervention led by the imperialist powers to restore capitalism in what became the Soviet Union. The new holiday, on the other hand, marks what is believed to be the date of the UPA’s foundation.

Also on April 9, a law was passed banning all communist symbols in Ukraine, in line with Justice Minister Pavel Petrenko’s pledge to prepare the “de-communization” of Ukraine before the May 9 celebration of the 70th anniversary of the USSR’s victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. Announcing the measures on national television last week, Petrenko said that banning public symbols of communism “is something we should have done 20 years ago.”

The anti-communist law, which ultimately passed 274-0, denounces both communist and Nazi regimes as “criminal under the law,” banning propaganda in their favor and all public display of their symbols. The law criminalizes untold thousands of avenue names, statues, public artworks and military decorations for service during World War II that refer to Soviet officials, military victories or cultural events.

It also mandates that all political parties, organizations and media outlets accused of supporting communism will be shut down. It declares that its purpose is “not to let such crimes happen in the future, and to eliminate the threat to Ukraine’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, and national security.”

Ukrainian officials cynically noted that both the hammer-and-sickle emblem of the USSR and the Nazi swastika were illegal under the de-communization law. However, the target of the Ukrainian legislature is clearly not fascism, but socialism and the legacy of the USSR.

The ban on the swastika will not inconvenience the fascistic groups that support the Kiev regime, such as the Right Sector or Aidar militias or the Svoboda Party—many of which adopted the wolf’s head rune or other fascist symbols as less nakedly pro-Nazi alternatives to the swastika. Indeed, insofar as the bill prevents these groups from sporting swastika symbols, this aids the Kiev regime by hiding its political coloration to workers internationally.

The Stalinist Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU), already targeted for a possible legal ban and whose parliamentary faction has been dissolved, impotently protested the law, warning that it might provoke broader social opposition. “A war veteran is now banned from wearing the Order of the Red Star, for which he has shed his blood. All this only leads to a

greater split in society and continuation of war,” KPU leader Pyotr Simonenko declared.

These odious legislative acts expose the criminal role of the Kiev regime and of the imperialist powers, led by Washington and Berlin, that installed it in power through a putsch led by the Right Sector in February of last year. The Kiev government then plunged the more pro-Russian east Ukraine into civil war, backed by the NATO powers, in what now threatens to escalate into all-out war between NATO and Russia.

Ukraine and its imperialist backers are reacting to its recent defeat at the hands of Russian-backed separatists in the east by relying even more directly on fascist forces. It fears growing opposition among workers throughout Ukraine to austerity measures and, above all, to draft orders. Amidst widespread opposition to the draft in the west, the Right Sector militia has been granted official status as an associate of the Ukrainian armed forces, which Washington and its European allies plan to arm and train against pro-Russian forces.

The passage of the laws also expose the Western media’s attempt to dismiss reports of fascist involvement in the Kiev putsch as Russian propaganda. Claims of fascist involvement in the Kiev regime were attacked as “empty” (the *New York Times*), “a fancy” (the *Guardian*), or “the supreme lie” (*Le Monde*). Now, however, the Kiev regime itself is broadcasting its fascist sympathies.

The forces Kiev is rehabilitating are directly implicated in the commission of the most horrific crimes of European fascism: the Holocaust that killed over 6 million Jews and the Nazi invasion of the USSR, which led to the death of 27 million Soviet citizens.

The OUN was founded in 1929 as an anti-communist organization fighting for Ukrainian independence. The leader of its largest faction during World War II, Stepan Bandera, fought for an independent Ukraine ethnically cleansed of all other nationalities.

After the Nazi invasion of the USSR in 1941, the OUN offered itself up as an auxiliary force to the Nazi *Wehrmacht* to fight the Soviet Union, assisting in the Nazi massacre of 200,000 Jews in the Volhynia region in 1942. It launched its own campaign of mass murder against Polish villages in Volhynia and Galicia in 1943, murdering between 60,000 and 100,000 Poles. It also attacked pro-Soviet partisans fighting the Nazi occupation of Ukraine.

After the Soviet defeat of the Nazis and the end of World War II, the CIA established relations with the OUN to carry out covert actions targeting the Soviet Union.

The descendants of these fascist criminals are now being mobilized in an attempt to stabilize the unpopular regime in Kiev, escalate war against Russia and terrorize widespread domestic opposition. The law rehabilitating the OUN was drafted and introduced by Yuri Shuhevych, a Radical Party legislator whose father, Roman, led the OUN-linked Nightingale Battalion (*Bataillon Ukrainische Gruppe Nachtigall*) that operated under Nazi orders.

The government’s fear of the May 9 holiday and its insistence on banning all mention of Ukraine’s Soviet past and struggle against Nazi occupation reflect its awareness that its policies are massively unpopular, and concerns that opposition in the working class could take explosive forms. Despite constant pro-fascist propaganda, pro-Nazi forces attracted little support in last year’s legislative elections, with Svoboda receiving 4.71 percent of the vote and the Right Sector 1.8 percent.

This underscores that the rehabilitation of fascism in Ukraine is driven from the top, by the Kiev regime and its imperialist overlords.



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