Ukrainian government officials celebrate Nazism, anti-Semitism

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Several recent incidents in Ukraine have further exposed the far-right nature of the forces unleashed by the 2014 Maidan "revolution" that ousted then-President Viktor Yanukovych and eventually brought to power the country's current, widely despised leader, oligarch Petro Poroshenko, whose approval rating has collapsed to just 17 percent.

In a recent video posted to the internet, Artyom Vitko, parliament member and representative of the nationalist Radical Party, can be seen riding in an SUV drinking vodka and singing along to an anti-Semitic song titled "Adolf Hitler is Together with Us" by a Russian neo-Nazi rock group. Vitko, who has also served as a commander in the government-backed Luhansk Battalion that is fighting to suppress pro-Russian breakaway regions in Ukraine's Donbass, is shown enjoying the lyrics to the song's chorus, "Adolf Hitler is together with us, Adolf Hitler is in each of us, and an eagle with iron wings will help us at the right time." As part of his duties as a member of the Ukrainian parliament, Vitko sits on a committee dedicated to improving ties between Israel and Ukraine.

The far-right leader first made international headlines in January 2015 when he supposedly threw blood in the face of Gennady Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of Russia, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) in Strasbourg, France. According to a public Facebook posting by fellow Radical Party member Dmytro Linko, "At the entrance to PACE's building, Artyom Vitko and I hurled blood at the face of Russian Communist Zyuganov. We smacked him in his hostile mug."

The video's exposure was preceded by reports that the mayor in the city of Konotop, located in northern Ukraine, has been openly displaying anti-Semitic symbols.

According to the *Jerusalem Post*, Mayor Artyom Semenikhin, who is a member of the far-right Svoboda Party, "drives around in a car bearing the number 14/88, a numerological reference to the phrases 'we must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children' and 'Heil Hitler'; replaced the picture of President Petro Poroshenko in his office with a portrait of Ukrainian national leader and Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera; and refused to fly the city's official flag at the opening meeting of the city council because he objected to the star of David emblazoned on it."

The release of the video with Vitko singing neo-Nazi songs coincided an official visit to Israel by Ukrainian President Poroshenko. In meetings with Labor Party members, Poroshenko downplayed the rise of anti-Semitism as a political ideology in Ukraine and blamed Russia for promoting anti-Semitism in Crimea.

According to Labor Party lawmaker Ksenia Svetlova, Poroshenko stated, "In Ukraine, Jews have nothing to fear. But in the Crimea they are oppressed and not allowed in synagogue." Jewish organizations in Crimea, which is now controlled by Russia, declared Poroshenko's statements to be false.

In a grotesque display of political hypocrisy, during his visit to Israel, Poroshenko declared in a speech before the Knesset, "We must remember the negative events in history, when collaborators helped the Nazis seek the Final Solution." He announced that Ukraine would hold an official 75th anniversary memorial of the massacre at Babi Yar site in Kiev, where Nazi forces killed nearly 34,000 Jews.

Last April, Poroshenko's government officially rehabilitated the country's Nazi collaborators, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the

Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), and moved the country's "Defender of Ukraine Day" to coincide with the formation date of the UPA.

In an expression of the Zionist regime's utter bankruptcy and the falsity of its claim to defend the world's Jewish population, Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu later stated that he plans to attend the memorial ceremony in Ukraine.

Today, the direct political and familial descendants of the OUN and the UPA are found in Ukraine's government-backed, far-right military battalions and political parties, such as Svoboda and Vitko's Radical Party. The latter, for instance, counts Yuriy Shukhevych among its parliamentary members. Yuriy Shukhevych's father, Roman Shukhevych, was a leader of the UPA. The younger Shukhevych helped draft the April 2015 law honoring Ukraine's Nazi collaborators.

Since the Kiev regime came to power in a US-backed coup in February 2014, the fascist forces that carried out the overthrow of elected President Viktor Yanukovych have committed violent atrocities against opponents in an effort to terrorize the population into submission.

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