Canadian imperialism's fascist friends—Part 5: Mobilize the working class against the US-NATO war with Russia and fascist reaction!

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This is the conclusion to a five-part series. The first part introduced Canadian imperialism's long-standing alliance with far-right Ukrainian nationalism. Part two investigated the origins of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and the anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi record of Krakivski Visti, *which was edited by Mikhailo Chomiak, the grandfather of Canada's Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland. Part three documented how the OUN and Stepan Bandera's Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) participated in the Nazi's war of annihilation against the Soviet Union and served as the Nazis' henchman in the Holocaust. Part four traced how the Canadian state provided refuge to the Nazis' OUN accomplices and incubated and promoted far-right Ukrainian nationalism.*

What began as a US- and NATO-instigated proxy war with Russia over Ukraine is rapidly evolving into a catastrophic clash between nuclear-armed powers that endangers the very survival of humanity. With virtually each passing day Washington, with the enthusiastic backing of the Trudeau Liberal government and the entire Canadian political establishment, announces further arms shipments to Ukraine and expanded war aims.

In the words of US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, the war must permanently "weaken" Russia and remove it as a factor in global geopolitics. For his part, US President Joe Biden has characterized the war as marking "an inflection point" akin to the global convulsions that killed tens of millions between 1914 and 1945. "There's going to be a new world order out there," declared Biden, "and we've got to lead it."

This series has been motivated by the urgent need to mobilize the working class against the war and all the capitalist governments waging it—from that of the US and other NATO powers to the Putin regime, whose only answer to imperialist encirclement was to mount a reactionary and bankrupt military adventure, based on Great Russian chauvinism, that has played into the hands of the imperialist powers.

Exposing the decades-long alliance between the Canadian state and the Ukrainian far-right shock troops Ottawa and Washington have used to prepare, instigate and now wage war with Russia—Canadian imperialism's fascist friends—is essential to laying bare the imperialist character of the present conflict and mobilizing an international working class-led anti-war movement to put a stop to it.

The imperialist propaganda belched out on a daily basis by the political establishment and its media lackeys is designed to whip up a war fever and conceal the conflict's real aims. We are told war must be waged to protect Ukraine's "sovereign right" to join NATO, the world's most aggressive military alliance, defend Ukrainian "democracy" and safeguard "Western values." The latest version of the 21st century's White Man's Burden is that American imperialism and its allies, Canada included, must risk a shooting war with Russian naval vessels in the Black Sea to facilitate Ukrainian grain exports and thereby "save" the world's hungry.

The dishonesty of these claims and the predatory ambitions they are meant to conceal are demonstrated by examining, as this series has done, the far-right Ukrainian political forces Canadian imperialism has collaborated with and promoted over the past eight decades.

If the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN)—a violent fascist outfit from its very inception in 1929—lives on in the Azov Battalion and the other far-right militias now being touted as the "heroes" of "democratic Ukrainian self-defence," it is largely thanks to the Canadian state and political establishment. They provided the Nazi's OUN collaborators refuge, assisted them in whitewashing their crimes and promoted far-right Ukrainian nationalism as an instrument of Canadian imperialist foreign and domestic policy.

Our historical review has demonstrated that the OUN was an accomplice in some of history's most monstrous crimes, including the extermination of 6 million European Jews in the Holocaust. Long before Hitler launched his war of annihilation against the Soviet Union in June 1941, OUN ideologists were spouting vicious anti-Semitism and justifying genocidal violence against Jews and Poles as an integral part of their drive to create an "independent" capitalist Ukraine.

"Canadian imperialism's fascist friends" has paid particular attention to refuting the claims, long promoted by the Canadian state-sponsored Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) and the contemporary Ukrainian fascists, that Stepan Bandera, his OUN (B) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) fought for Ukraine's "national liberation." The "Ukrainian State Power" the OUN (B) proclaimed, after its supporters entered Lviv on the heels of the German army in June 1941, was nothing more than a would-be servile client state of the Nazis' "New Europe." Bandera ordered his followers to serve in Nazi auxiliary police units that rounded up and prepared Ukraine's Jews for mass extermination, before opportunistically forming the UPA when the tide of World War II began to turn against the Nazis. Even then, the OUN (B) continued to collaborate with the Nazis and in pursuit of an ethnically "pure" "Ukraine for Ukrainians" carried out ethnic cleansing campaigns in which tens of thousands of Poles and Jews perished.

The Canadian state operated an open door policy for the Nazis' Ukrainian accomplices, including the members of the Waffen SS Galicia Division following World War II, because it saw them as staunch anticommunist allies in waging the Cold War at home and abroad.

Through the UCC, which had been founded in 1940 at the behest of the War Department and its affiliates, the Canadian state has incubated and promoted far-right Ukrainian nationalism, and especially the cult

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surrounding Bandera and his OUN (B)/UPA.

As the Stalinists moved to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union, far-right nationalists with roots in Ukraine and other Soviet republics were redeployed by Ottawa to Eastern Europe to press for the creation of "independent" states under Western tutelage. Since 1991, the UCC and its far-right Ukrainian nationalist allies have come to play an outsized role in Canadian imperialism's efforts to harness Ukraine to NATO and the European Union and, at least since the 2014 Maidan regime-change operation, in its preparations for war with Russia in league with US imperialism.

The fascist forces patronized by the Canadian state, trained by the Canadian military and enabled by the UCC and powerful sections of the Ukrainian state are a major and menacing force—one that glories in the promotion of anti-Semitism and the most vile traditions of its OUN forebearers. Michael Colborne, author of the first book-length investigation of the Azov movement's history and activities, warns that it "has been able to operate with a brazen level of openness, including with the alleged protection of powerful political forces" to "build a powerful and dangerous far-right movement." "Its two-faced embrace of violence and its ambitions to be part of an increasingly powerful transnational far right make it," he adds, "a threat beyond Ukraine's borders." All of this is well known in ruling class and media circles but systematically covered up. As a *Hill Times* columnist recently noted, "While the Trudeau government denounces white supremacist extremism at home, it meets with them in the dark" in Ukraine.

Chrystia Freeland and the Canadian state's alliance with the Ukrainian far right

Our exposure of the alliance between the Canadian state and the Ukrainian far right has also included an examination of the political ancestry of Chrystia Freeland, Canada's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister. Not only is Freeland the leading anti-Russia "war hawk" in the Trudeau government. She is also playing an important role in imperialist war councils and, according to all reports, in shaping the actions of the Ukrainian government.

When it was revealed in 2017 that Freeland's grandfather Mykhailo Chomiak, to whom she regularly pays homage for schooling her in Ukrainian nationalism and culture, was a World War II Nazi collaborator, the Canadian political establishment and corporate media closed ranks to claim that she was the target of "Russian disinformation."

This series has conclusively shown that disinformation and lying there have been aplenty. Only it has been on the part of the Liberal government, the Conservative and NDP opposition and the Canadian capitalist elite's media mouthpieces.

First, as we have exhaustively demonstrated, Chomiak was for five years the handsomely rewarded editor of *Krakivski Visti*,the most influential Ukrainian newspaper in all Nazi-occupied Europe. As such, he helped disseminate Nazi war propaganda, incite hatred for Jews amid the Holocaust and rally support for the Nazi war of extermination against the Soviet Union. *Krakivski Visti* played a major role in drumming up support for the all-Ukrainian Waffen SS Galicia Division.

Second, and even more significantly, "Canadian imperialism's fascist friends" has demonstrated that far from Freeland's political ancestry being an historical curiosity without contemporary relevance, it is of burning political importance. She is the product and indeed embodiment of the alliance between the Canadian state and Ukrainian far right—an alliance that has enabled the pro-Bandera-ite UCC to wield significant and growing influence over Canada's governments, under the Liberals and Conservatives alike.

Canada's media could not and cannot tolerate any discussion of the fascist origins of the OUN, its participation in the Holocaust and Canadian imperialism's role in rehabilitating the Nazis' Ukrainian accomplices and in incubating far-right Ukrainian nationalism. That is because, to put it in a nutshell, this entire history refutes the false narrative they have promoted in seeking to transform Ukraine into a vassal of the Western imperialist powers and make it a staging ground for provocation and war against Russia. Today, when war has erupted and this narrative is fundamental to their efforts to deceive and manipulate workers and youth into supporting it, this is truer still.

Canadian imperialism's predatory character and the role of the establishment "left"

The exposure of Canadian imperialism's decades-long role in promoting Ukrainian far-right nationalism and its fascist purveyors also refutes the myth, incessantly promoted since the 1960s by "progressive" and "left" forces like the NDP, that Canadian capitalism is "gentler" and "kinder" than the rapacious dollar republic to the south. In reality, Canadian imperialism has a long bloody record, far too extensive to recount here. But it should be noted that Canada was a major belligerent in both imperialist world wars of the last century, joining them at their outset, long before the United States. Moreover, while Canadian workers were being slaughtered in those wars in the North Atlantic, Europe and the Far East, Canadian capitalism experienced its most rapid 20th century industrial expansions. Both ended with Canadian imperialism having secured enhanced global power and influence. It is not for nothing that the ruling class celebrates the 1917 World War I Battle of Vimy Ridge for having secured "Canadian independence."

Nor is Ukraine the only place where Canadian imperialism and its military have closely collaborated with far-right and outright fascist forces. Since the 1990s, they have done so repeatedly while supporting US imperialism's never-ending wars and military interventions. In 1999, Canada and the other NATO powers aligned with the Kosovo Liberation Army, which was made up of gangsters and drug smugglers and driven by poisonous anti-Serb nationalism, in waging war on Serbia. Canada and the US coordinated their 2004 invasion of Haiti and removal of its elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, with an insurgency led by veterans of the Tontons Macoutes, the paramilitary gangs that sowed terror during the three decades-long Duvalier dictatorship. Seven years later, Canada aligned with reactionary Islamist forces in NATO's "regime change" war in Libya. Canadian officers candidly admitted, even joked, that NATO's warplanes functioned in Libya as "al-Qaida's air force."

These military interventions were all supported by the NDP. Indeed, shortly after the ostensible "left" Jack Layton became NDP leader in 2003—and as NATO was rapidly expanding eastward so as to encircle Russia, and broadening its field of operations to Asia by joining the US-led neo-colonial war in Afghanistan—Canada's social democrats abandoned even their phony nominal opposition to Canada's participation in NATO.

In 2020 and the first weeks of 2021, as Washington and Ottawa intensified their pressure on Russia, the NDP joined the Conservatives and the UCC in demanding the Trudeau government press with greater vigour for Ukraine's admission to NATO. And, as we noted in the conclusion to Part 4, it was the NDP that authored the unanimously-adopted parliamentary motion that provocatively labeled Russia's invasion of Ukraine as a "genocide."

Since its founding in 2006, the pseudo-left Québec Solidaire (QS) has

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invariably lent support to Canadian imperialism's wars, be it against Afghanistan and Libya or the current war over Ukraine. Like the rest of the Quebec "sovereignist" or pro-independence movement, QS has voiced not so much as a word of criticism of Canada's massive military sending hikes.

With the full-throated backing of the trade unions, Jagmeet Singh and his New Democrats responded to the outbreak of the Ukraine war by forging a formal governmental alliance with the minority Justin Trudeau-led Liberal government. The NDP has pledged to keep the Liberals in power until June 2025 as they wage war in Ukraine, massively hike military spending, pivot to "post-pandemic" austerity and preside over inflation-driven real wage cuts for workers.

The rehabilitation of the far right

The Canadian ruling elite's cultivation of far-right forces to enforce its interests is not confined to foreign policy. During January and February 2022, a substantial section of the ruling class, led by the Conservative opposition, incited and built up the fascistic Freedom Convoy. The Convoy's occupation of downtown Ottawa, which was accompanied by open threats of political violence and calls for a putsch and an emergency dictatorial regime, was used as a battering ram to overcome popular support for COVID-19 public health measures, destabilize the Liberal government and push politics far to the right. The Liberals, with NDP support, responded by invoking the never-before-used Emergencies Act—thereby strengthening the powers of the capitalist state, a key nexus of far-right conspiracies and incitement—and by greenlighting the provinces' implementation of the Convoy's demand that all remaining anti-COVID mitigation measures be scrapped.

The vomiting up of the most reactionary political forces is a phenomenon common to all of the major capitalist powers. As the global crisis of the profit system deepens, expressed in the unprecedented growth in social inequality, the deaths of close to 20 million people during the pandemic and the looming threat of world war, the ruling elites in the imperialist centres are inciting far-right forces and turning toward authoritarian forms of rule.

In the United States, Donald Trump and much of the Republican Party leadership attempted a fascist coup on January 6, 2021. Its failure in no way signifies that the danger is past, especially given the fact that Biden and the Democrats have opposed efforts to hold any of the principal figures accountable and persist in describing the Republican coup plotters as their "colleagues." In Germany, a network of fascist army officers, police officials and intelligence agents pervades the state apparatus and has drafted lists of political opponents to be assassinated on "Day X." Germany's ruling elite has systematically promoted the neo-fascist Alternative for Germany as a respectable political party, adopting many of its policies, especially in respect to refugees. Last but not least, hand in hand with German rearmament there has been a concerted campaign by the political establishment and media to relativize the crimes of German imperialism in the last century, including those of the Hitler regime.

The chief reason the ruling classes of the imperialist powers are bringing forward far-right and outright fascist forces is their mortal fear of the growing global upsurge of the working class. After decades of suppression of the class struggle by the trade unions and establishment "left" parties, working people in every country are being driven into struggle by the impossible conditions of life created by exploding inflation, unprecedented social inequality, mass infection and death during the pandemic and the prospect of being turned into cannon fodder for the geostrategic interests of the ruling elite. Exposing before the working masses the political and ideological links between the horrendous crimes perpetrated by the imperialists during the first half of the 20th century and the revival of similar methods of repression and plunder today is crucial in order to turn these initial expressions of working class anger into a conscious political movement against capitalism.

It is from the working class—the only consistently revolutionary force in capitalist society—that opposition to war and the rise of fascism will come. The strikes and mass protests now erupting the world over must be armed with a socialist and internationalist program. This struggle demands the building of the Socialist Equality Party and International Committee of the Fourth International as the revolutionary leadership for working people in Canada and around the world.

Concluded

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