



Ukraine: only action of proletariat can stop nationalist threatening with war

Mass protests in Ukraine, which were sparked by not signing the association agreement and a free trade agreement with EU by President Yanukovich, have lasted for more than three months now and have escalated to nationalist hysteria, threatening with weapons, both from Russian side and by the protests strengthened mostly West-oriented Ukraine opposition. For example, neo-fascist Svoboda (Freedom) Party, which emerged from the protests boosted thanks to their organization not only on the barricades of Maidan and which has obtained five ministerial posts in the new government, including Deputy Prime Minister and general attorney, would like to insure the position of Ukraine with accession to the NATO structures and with renewal of nuclear arsenal. This launched a game that teeters on the edge of open military conflict, could be the beginning of a global war of destruction of forming imperialist blocks, which would be built over the existing economic and political alliances.

For Russia may support of Russian nationalism in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea be part of the larger geopolitical game tarnishing its recently injured position as the imperialist super-power, specifically after the loss of its influence in Libya (where because of the Gaddafi's fall, in which Western super-powers were engaged, Russia lost a possible naval base) and potential loss of the last Russian naval base in the Mediterranean in Syrian Tartus, if Russia and Iran supported Bashar Assad would be defeated. The development regarding the Crimea may follow the same scenario as in the case of occupation of territories of South Ossetia or Abkhazia. It may also be a tactic to get to the head of the Ukrainian state elements such as the now mostly discredited Tymoshenko, which already have in the past emerged as being able to communicate with Putin. Ukrainian bourgeoisie is lobbying in the EU and in the USA for a strong response to Russia, but the EU mainly due to Germany and its economic interests and energy needs, will in effect remain with toothless verbal threats. To set off an imaginary powder keg it will take steps and conspiracies of the USA and

Russia itself, probably through the exploitation of nationalist militias, of which exist on both sides too many.

Either way, one thing is clear. The nationalist hysteria and direction of the whole development show that the proletariat – a collective wage worker - in this storyline plays the role of extras unable to express its own interests and its resistance to be mobilized for the interests of the national bourgeoisie as potential cannon fodder.

Initial protests, that began in November 2013, were by their nature peaceful protests of students, urban “middle strata”, the petty bourgeoisie and minority of workers, an image of inter-class civil society, for whom the signing of association agreements with the EU was a move closer to the standards of living of more western Europe, either directly through the visa policy easing, or through the false dream of Western Europe as a paradise without corruption, high wages, social security, honest politicians, law, clean streets... So, except some material dimension at least for inhabitants of western Ukraine through bourgeois ideology mediated idea of a better material life. Polarization the EU versus the former pro-Russian president Yanukovich has characterized the protests by strong anti-Russians sentiments since the beginning, as an expression of resistance against today's post-Soviet reality. After violent and sadistic police attack during early December days, protests spread, multiplied, attracted interest of working masses and got transformed into general anti-government and pro-democracy protests.

Starvation wages, the average wage is less than 200 Euros, contrasts with fabulous wealth of oligarchs and political elites connected with them, are the material basis for indignation of the masses, even more intensified with the impact of the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, that hit Ukraine with 15% decrease of GDP. Ironically, it was “ousted”, for embezzlement repeatedly accused, President Yanukovich belonging to Donetsk oligarchs, who stopped some unpopular austerity measures ap-

plied by previous political elites of the so called Orange Revolution supported by the West, led by "The Gas Princess" Tymoshenko, herself also belonging to oligarchs, whose former business partner of the time of her tenure at the energy company, Pavol Lazarenko is currently imprisoned in the U.S. for money laundering. History of post-Soviet Ukrainian politics is defined by changing oligarchic clans at the head of the state and the struggle between them.

The growing economic problems of Ukraine and the pressure of the imperialist powers to decide which block Ukraine would join, moved Yanukovich into an unenviable situation. The signing of the Association Agreement with the EU would for the proletariat Ukraine mean applying austerity measures. The signing could potentially, among other things, make Russia react in the way that would complicate cross-border labour migration for hundreds of thousands of Eastern Ukrainians and would probably cause also Yanukovich's political death anyway, even though Yanukovich has been "buying" some parts of the population till now, as in the case of favouring Eastern Ukraine and mining Donetsk. Yet even withdrawal from the signing, which was supported by a prompt agreement on Russian financial injection caused immediate impetus for the mobilization of opposition forces against Yanukovich. President's arrogance, violence by the police, kidnapping and murders at the hands of government paramilitary groups, all that have mobilized against the government the masses, whose "common sense" in the absence of proletarian organization structures has been based on nationalist fundamental assumptions. Opposition factions with themes of national unity, national democracy, national coalition against Yanukovich, has used well nationalism as a tool to prevent penetration of topics of everyday material reality of the proletariat. Even "spotless" boxing champion Klitschko, whose centre-right UDAR made its existence thanks to the funding from the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation, linked to Merkel and her CDU, also plays the tone of nationalism with his campaign "Do not worry, you are Ukrainian". Neo-fascist Tyahnybok whose Svoboda party uses pro-Western democratization in a populist way purely for their political gains, belongs with Klitschko and Tymoshenko's Yatsenyuk to the leaders of so-called anti-Yanukovich revolution.

With approval of repressive laws (*Article 206 of the Criminal Codex*) at the 16th January by Yanukovich's MPs, prosecuting so-called extremism, defined as acts inciting social conflicts, has mobilized even more masses into the protests with pro-democratic sentiments. An idea of better democracy does not correspond with the positions of Svoboda party and even with more extreme and more violent Right sector, however, it was these two neo-fascist groups that have played a crucial role in fighting on Maidan barricades, for which they have earned respect among the masses, enhanced with the fact that in connection with the new anti-extremist law the defenders of the barricades had no choice – either to go and face upcoming "cleansing" from the hands of special paramilitary squads and state prosecution for illegal military formation with charges of 2 to 15 years in

prison or to hold on and believe in the fall of Yanukovich.

Since 23rd of January the Maidan movement had occupied governmental buildings in Kiev, Lviv, Ternopil, Uzhhorod, Khmelnytskyi, Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne, Zaporozhye, Poltava, Vinnytsia and other cities, elsewhere protesters blocked access to buildings, but did not take a control of them. Important roads were also blocked. Governors of several large cities were forced by the crowd to resign, others fled, villa of governor of Uzhhorod was burnt down. Occupied buildings were used as field hospitals, canteens and dormitories, but the movement did not use them to equip itself with discussion and decision-making bodies. Attempts to establish general assemblies and councils "without politicians" failed or came under the control of the opposition parties. Democratic opposition finally, despite not being very keen on the occupations since the beginning and even claimed that it is a provocation, determined the agenda of occupied space or worse, they assumed their management. They also prevent spontaneous destruction of documents and demolishing of equipment in occupied governmental buildings. In some cases (like in Lviv) the protesters partially released the occupied building in order "to allow officials to work". And finally, it was right the opposition that pushed to end of the occupations as it was one of the conditions for the amnesty that it had previously negotiated.

The movement didn't try to block the Ukrainian economy, there are no traces of sabotages or strikes. On the contrary, we could see the proletarians, who took vacation so they could participate to demonstrations, or others who were coming to camp in Maidan after a twelve-hour shift and leaving in the morning to go back to work.

What will an ordinary observer of events in the Ukraine probably stick in his memory the most, are the huge clashes between demonstrators and police, the streets filled with smoke from burning barricades and tear gas from police reserves, and particularly the immense brutality of the repression forces, 112 dead and more than 2,000 injured on the side of the demonstrators. But mass dimension of the protests sparked the fire of contradictions even among the elite units of Berkut designated for repression of riots. Some protesters tried to fraternize with the Robocops already in November and December, when they offered them food and warm drinks. But only the fact that more and more people joined the movement triggered that the members of repressive forces started to join the side of the demonstrators either because they shared their criticism of governmental power, or because they simply refused to shoot into the crowd where their friends and relatives were standing. Since the moment when there appeared a danger that Yanukovich's government deploys army against demonstrators, groups composed of soldiers' families but also complete strangers were set up, which were trying to discuss with soldiers in front of the barracks and to persuade them to refuse to participate in a possible crackdown on demonstrators.

Svoboda party and the Right sector gained points because of present nationalism and their preparedness and organization and their pre-existing violent structures. Traditional opposition parties are largely discredited and therefore Svoboda and Right sector appear as uncorrupted groupings, where Svoboda seems to be more radical alternative for outraged "unblemished public" (a parallel with Greek Golden Dawn comes to a mind) and Right sector with its mix of Nazism and anti-capitalism is more sexy for the youth. The chairman of the Right sector, that is now transforming itself into a political party, became deputy head of the National Security and Defence Council and announced that he will run for president of Ukraine.

In the context of nationalism, anti-Russian and pro-democracy sentiment during protests and with the absence of any explicitly articulated direct economic topics of the exploited masses, it is hardly shocking that the new government that came out of the protests appointed two billionaire oligarchs – one that runs his business from Switzerland – as new governors in Donetsk and Dnepropetrovsk in the East. Now the ruling opposition intends to introduce as soon as possible the implementation of austerity measures and social changes in dictate of the EU, the IMF, which will even further empty the pockets of the proletarians, as elucidated by Klitschko: "It is essential that we begin with the reforms. We need to help our economy that every day falls into bigger and bigger problems. We cannot wait another day..." Ukrainian bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia are confident in their shoes, the material interests of the proletariat are effectively denied with the interest of the nation, national economy, as it is the case in other parts of the world. Not only because of this Ukraine is not an isolated battle, but a part of the global capitalist system and therefore a target of the same anti-proletarian austerity measures and resistance against them.

However, neither the position of the so called democratic opposition is very solid. It did not enjoy clear popularity within Maidan movement; on the contrary, it is seen by many as a bunch of opportunists always ready to betray the protest movement that brought it to power. Many of those who participated in the demonstrations now remember that many representatives of the "new" power once already governed the country. To name just one, the current Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, already occupied the post of Minister of Economy and Foreign Minister in one of the post orange-revolution governments. He, like other opposition leaders, was booed several times at demonstrations; Vitali Klitschko was even attacked by protesters. Freshly released Tymoshenko also enjoyed lukewarm reception at Maidan, her speech sparked a wave of indignation and had to be interrupted several times. Criticism of political parties is however limited to similar expressions and moods, and at this point it seems that it does not develop further.

Few and far between proletarian groups and militants, who intervened in the protests, who stood on positions against nationalism and did not join any of the competing bourgeois parties and who tried to articulate mate-

rial interests of the proletariat during protests and thereby influence protests' direction, were either attacked by the extreme right or were seen by masses as pro-Russian provocateurs. One cannot ignore sadism, kidnapping and murders committed by members of Yanukovich's state apparatus, but all those activists (class, trade union, feminist...), which currently got perhaps at worst broken a few bones by neo-fascists on the Maidan, are harbingers of the neo-fascist attack on the activities of exploited and oppressed. The fact that there were standing individuals of Jewish origin and of other post-Soviet nationalities next to fascists on barricades, that the popularity of extreme right between people of Maidan is overestimated are just a few non-essential details of the development; as little essential as a general indifference to the main opposition trio, as the existence of by the opposition unapproved occupations of government buildings and as the general mood of self-organization on the Maidan.

When neo-fascists, who are not supported by the majority for their fascist ideals, but as representatives of national independence, are able without resistance of the "unblemished public" violently smash social critique, although very isolated, led from proletarian positions or emancipatory efforts of various minorities, as well as when they are already entrenched existing political structures which are actually in charge of the daily life of Maidan, in addition to the general spirit of a will for individual participation and to the limited space for self-organization (the opposition does not have to bring 300 flags everyday as in days of the Orange Revolution to present its dominance), it is obvious that these are not a ideas and ideals carried in individual heads, what determine the socio-political dynamics and direction (Maidan) of movement.

The presence of proletarians who were part the Maidan movement, of course, grows from the fertile soil of social contradictions. Their direct material interests, as we said in the beginning, stand behind their participation and their actions. However, in absence of collective articulation of economic interests within a framework of the wage worker as a social class, action and will take place at the level of individual at the mercy of the whole machinery of bourgeois ideology domination. And individualism, as well as nationalism has always been a part of bourgeois ideology closely connected with the present mode of production and consumption, its language and the whole tangle of social relations. Collective action, of proletarians, is also led by economic interests, but differs in that that the process of development from an impulse, action, will to fight, to class consciousness and possible theoretical understanding of - the class division of society, capitalist exploitation of wage labour and therefore its revolutionary overcome – is gaining enormous dynamics for reverse criticism and theorization. Now no longer from a position of an isolated individual, but thanks to collective impulses and more powerful reactions from a position of forming mass revolutionary class – the proletariat - the only class that is able to solve poverty, extortion, police terror and imperialist wars, senseless waste and the apparent scarcities for all

masses (including the original initiators Maidan) by destruction of capitalism.

We do not want to submit here a bombastic analysis of economic, political, historical context which have influenced Maidan and the current nationalist hysteria. The fact is that without the existence of everyday proletarian resistance, struggle for their economic interests, without a structure and an organization, the proletariat as an independent actor in such a mass protest like Maidan is weak and faces attack of its class enemies. Individual proletarians and sectors can be “bought”, split, incite against each other using a national, ethnic, gender, racial affiliation.

Mass events, not only Maidan, show significant experience that being indifferent to the everyday struggles of the class, to take distance from their “limited” level and to improvise during a “big” movement is a fatal mistake, when it may already be too late for any attempts to influence class direction. Therefore it is important, that already now real class militants contribute to the political direction of the class and do not wait with this practice until the time when “the situation requires it”, and when it will be honour for them to trumpet pompously the revelation of a need for political leadership with an illusion that after they roll up their sleeves and begin this work and present the historical lessons of the proletarian class struggle, theoretical conclusions and directions for action, the class would embrace it with love. The bourgeoisie is always ready with its ideological apparatus, intellectuals, psychologists, and their death squads. Saying that today is not need for political training, that “preparation” of militants is not on the agenda, that now only need is to share information, to connect via social networks, to bring bombastic analyzes of the crisis and struggles’ horizons, to invent always valid strategies and measures – thus creating the illusion we are participants of the real class movement and we influence it, or just to follow in the steps of proletarian struggles with all their limitations, because “the class is not prepared for more” (tailism), - is not only wrong, but it has nothing to do with the activity of a communist vanguard. Not to make revolutionary communist orientation just some abstract improvisation, the influence of communist vanguards must be a dialectical join of the class and class struggle. This is more than a slogan “Freedom or death!”, spraying graffiti or preference for an immediate confrontation. It is necessary to try to theoretically understand what actually social relationships around us are about.

Therefore, in order to not let revolutionary overcoming of capitalism and militants who intervene in the struggles of the class and agitate for it, be regarded as admirers of the USSR, representatives of the Stalinist atrocities and the Ukrainian Holodomor in the 30th of the 20th century, groups claiming the revolutionary communist ideas must in principle demonstrate their theoretical and practical continuity. This continuity is not a “study circle of intellectuals”, but represents the connection with the

real class struggle. This continuity characterizes the continuity of the communist movement in time and space – historical Communist Party. Nowadays small communist minorities would be useless if these organized expressions of the communism would have lost real connection to the real social events and its primary expression, the real class struggle. Only this connection forms in this continuity the result but also the factor of history.

It’s a difficult time for class intervention in Ukraine. New opposition will probably make now strengthened extreme right some concessions, and will use it to destroy more socially subversive elements, before it would push the far-right itself back on the brink of political marginality. Meanwhile, the proletariat in Ukraine will have to undergo further attacks on their direct economic interests and to fight for the formulation of its own program. On the other hand, due to instability of the current system, which is heavily affected economically and politically, and moreover in the situation when a war between the Western imperialist block and no less imperialist Russia could break and spill more blood in the name of profit, conditions extend for defining our class interests and for discovery of real social alternative to capitalism. The aim of all class militants is to play a role in this process of possible development of a collective revolutionary program.

Therefore it’s necessary that proletariat in Ukraine and everywhere else:

★ **refuses economic sacrifices from its pocket and material bleeding in the name of social peace in the interest of national unity**

★ **rises up against state terror by both repressive forces and “moderate” social charlatans**

★ **refuses to be recruited into the capitalist wars, understands that all the wars are waged for the interests of bourgeoisie, that only one who sheds his own blood is proletariat and therefore all the wars are wars against proletariat**

★ **breaks with national, racial, religious unity and counters all the existing separations these of the proletariat as a worldwide class of exploited wage workers forced to break their capitalist shackles**

★ **connects to the red thread of proletarian class struggles all around the world and also in history, consciously raises a banner of communism, arms itself with an organized political leadership accelerating existing class war.**

**Workers of the world unite!
Communism or death!**

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