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Germany of 1930s and Ukraine in 2014: Ominous Similarity

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If one compares the Germany of the 1920-1930s and the Ukraine of today – the similarity is striking. The situation in the country allows a political party seen as a marginal one by the majority of population ride the wave of discontent to become a major political actor. It comes to power and establishes a dictatorship. Formally President von Hindenburg led the country, but the members of the National Socialist German Workers Party held all key government positions. Germany quickly turned into a totalitarian state. The same thing is taking place in Ukraine. Top government officials connive at advocates of Nazi ideology who grab all key positions. Only yesterday the Ukrainian Nazi were viewed as a marginal force and today they spread their views to make the ideology of national socialism permeate all aspects of public life.

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Social nationalism is another name for the ideology of Ukrainian integral nationalism that emerged in the 1920-1940s. According to its founders, the ideology is a compilation of German Nazism and Italian fascism adapted to the Ukrainian realities. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was the driving force spreading this ideology around. Stepan Bandera, one of the organization's leaders, got a prison sentence in Poland for committing a terrorist act. He was freed by Hitler's occupational force and recruited by Abwehr. Bandera went around by the nickname of Grey. Now the man is the most revered hero of the new Kiev regime. Eugene Konovalts (alias Consul), the first leader of OUN, and his successor Andrei Melnyk (Consul-2) also worked for Abwehr.

The revival of fascism in Ukraine started in the late 1980s. Underground student circles supported by Canada and US-based emigrants, former OUN fighters, sprang up in Lviv. As Ukraine became an independent state many groups emerged to announce themselves as ideological successors to the OUN's Bandera group: UNA-UNSO (the Ukrainian National Assembly - Ukrainian People's Self-Defense), the Congress of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Patriot of Ukraine, the Social-Nationalist Party (in 2005 renamed the All-Ukrainian Union Svoboda), the Social-National Party of Ukraine (SNPU), the Social-National Assembly of Ukraine (S.N.A.), the Stepan Bandera All-Ukrainian Organization "Trizub", the All-Ukrainian organization Sich etc. They all supported the idea of pure race totalitarian state and tough nationalist dictatorship ruled by the "leader of the nation".

In the late 1920s-early 1930s German newspaper Welt am Abend warned about the possibility of Hitlerites coming to power. It wrote that fascist combat units formally got separated from the party to go underground and act as sports unions, sharp shooters clubs, skittles clubs and singing groups. The same thing took place in Ukraine in 1990-2010. The UNA-UNSO, Trizub and Svoboda monopolized all the paintball, shooting and martial arts clubs and associations of football fans and scouts. They spread their ideology among senior school-goers and students. The nationalist propaganda was especially aggressive in the universities of Lviv, Kiev, Kharkov where students responded en mass to the calls for violent overthrow of government and unleashing a nationalist revolution in Ukraine.

It had been known many months before the Maidan events that nationalists had been preparing a coup. In October 2012 one of Svoboda leaders made a speech at the meeting in honor of UPA calling on Neo-Nazi to foster military spirit and hone combat skills to fight the occupation force. Her colleague Yuri Mikhalchishin made precise that it was necessary to prepare for urban warfare and "make the enemies of Ukrainian nation eat asphalt", meaning first of all Russians and Jews. A year later the Trizub leadership said at the press-conference that the plans existed to take power of the whole country and eliminate the enemies of the nation. The UNSO and the Patriot of Ukraine formally separated from Svoboda, that provided a training base for the party members, and started to run their own courses to master the combat, rappel assault and explosives handling skills, as well as tactics to capture buildings. The Pamyatka (Instruction) that was published in the third edition of Banderovets newspaper (2010) instructed everyone to learn martial arts, master military endurance sports, shooting and knife fight skills. The same newspaper explained what the training was required to seize power soon. The groups mentioned

above, as well as outright racists and anti-Semitists, like “fighters for the purity of white race” from White Hammer, became the main fighting force during the coup that took place in Kiev in February 2014. Like in the case of German SA, the groups’ militants formed units called “hundreds of Maidan self-defense”. The fascist Germany used the “Sieg Heil!” greeting as a way of saluting. The activists of Maidan-2014 movement greeted each other with words “Long Live Free Ukraine!” to be answered with “Long Live Heroes!” in response, the very same way it is practiced by Bandera followers. As time went by this semi-official All-Ukrainian greeting became the official way to hail each other in the Ukrainian armed forces. They salute with right hand – a well-known gesture. The OUN red-black flag became the second semi-official flag of Ukraine that inherited the Nazi symbols - blood and soil.

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Coming to power Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Alexander Turchinov and Petro Poroshenko could not but express gratitude to neo-Nazi for the support. Valentin Nalivaichenko has close links to Trizub, the group which served as a basis for Pravy Sector (a Ukrainian nationalist political party). He was appointed the head of Ukrainian Security Service. Andriy Parubiy is the founder of the Patriot of Ukraine and Social-Nationalist Party. He got the position of Ukraine’s National Security and Defense Council. Igor Smeshko, a retired Colonel-General (three stars), is the founder of Sich which is part of Social-National Assembly of Ukraine. Some time ago he was appointed presidential advisor and chairman of the presidential committee for intelligence. Sergey Kwit banned the use of Russian language on the territory of Kiev Mohyla Academy that he headed at the time. Now he became the Minister of Education. Ihor Shvaika and Andrey Mohnik, the Svoboda political party members, now head, accordingly, the ministries of agriculture and ecology and natural resources. There are many other people who hold less important positions to instill the ideological mixture of Italian fascism and German Nazism into all spheres of life from economy to military training, from art and TV to school education.

On October 6, Odessa-based Timer published the text of school dictation for Ukrainian language learners. Here is a fragment, that goes as, “We – the children of Ukraine and she is our mother. Mothers, as is known, are not chosen. Honest people. Born Ukrainians, the people of Little Russia refuse to recognize their native mother and go to stepmother to serve her as if she were the one to give them birth...These creatures only look like humans being scum of the earth in reality. They are only half humans even if they have higher education and academic degrees. Since a long time ago they deserve to be behind bars in Ukrainian jails. The prisons shed tears willing to accommodate their “clients”. Don’t cry, prisons, your time will come, Ukrainophobes will be behind bars and not as your guests. They will come to stay forever. And then the Ukrainian society will get rid of this trash, this unbearable filth and shame”.

Yuri Mikhalchishin is appointed deputy head of the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) responsible for analysis and ideological work. Since 2012 Mikhalchishin is a member of Ukrainian parliament and one of leading ideologists of Nazi Svoboda party. He played a pivotal role in making public the speeches of Goebbels to be read in Ukraine now. He believes that the social nationalist revolution is ahead to change the world and “only the people with new mindset and pattern of action can create the new life as they are not burdened by the past”.

Valentin Nalivaichenko, the head of Ukrainian counterintelligence, has been a sponsor of terrorist organization Trizub for a few years being involved in the combat training of its members. With him at the helm one can imagine what kind of ideological work his deputy Yuri Mikhalchishin will do!

Like Gestapo in the fascist Germany the Ukrainian Security Service is not under the jurisdiction of administrative courts. To oppose its activities one cannot appeal to justice like in the case of other state bodies. The same way as Gestapo the service enjoys the right of preventive arrest without a court decision. Like the subordinates of Heinrich Himmler in the 1930s-1940s the Ukrainian Security Service operatives supervise the implementation of the slave labor program called “public works”. The agency led by Nalivaichenko is notorious for cruel tortures and beatings. The fact is proven by ample evidence provided by the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s republics self-defence forces servicemen, as well as civilians accused of separatism. The Ukrainian counter-intelligence operatives practice assassinations of the government’s political opponents. For instance Alexander Samoilo, the pro-rector of Kharkiv International Slavic University, was detained by Ukrainian Security Service in Kharkiv together with some other “separatists”.

Turning a blind eye on the similarities between the Germany of Hitler and the contemporary Ukraine is tantamount to allowing a Nazi state emerge in the heart of Europe. The state that poisons their people by inculcating the ideology of the ethnic exclusiveness, propagates the idea of physical extermination of dissidents and feeds the dreams of global domination exercised by militarized Ukraine going nuclear. It’s not an exaggeration: it’s enough to read the program of any organization mentioned in the article to see that the affirmation is true.