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Monsters of Ukraine: Made in the USA

By Justin Raimondo
July 30, 2015

We're in the summer doldrums of the news cycle, a perfect time for our government and the media – or do I repeat myself? – to drop certain inconvenient stories down the Memory Hole. My job, of course, is to retrieve them....

Remember Ukraine? I seem to recall blaring headlines about a supposedly “imminent” and “massive” Russian invasion of that country: the Anglo-Saxon media was ablaze with a veritable countdown to D-Day and we were treated to ominous sightings of Russian troops and tanks gathering at the border, allegedly just awaiting the order from Putin to take Kiev. And it turns out there *has* been an invasion, of sorts – although it isn't a Russian one. It's the Kiev regime's own foot-soldiers returning from the front and turning on their masters.

The war is going badly for the government of oligarch Petro Poroshenko. The east Ukrainians, who rose in revolt after the US-sponsored coup threw out democratically elected President Viktor Yanukovich, show no signs of giving up: they've repulsed the “anti-terrorist” campaign launched by Kiev, withstanding relentless bombardment of their cities and enduring many thousands of casualties, not to mention widespread destruction. Indeed, the brutal protracted war waged by Kiev against its own “citizens” has arguably steeled the rebels' resolve and made any thought of reconciliation unthinkable.

As is usual with violent fanatics, the war aims of the Kiev coup leaders – to bring the eastern provinces back into the fold – have been rendered impossible by their methods and conduct. The de facto blockade imposed on the east has bound the separatists all the more tightly to Russia,

and so economics as well as searing hatred of a government the easterners regard as “fascist” has sealed the country’s fate.

Unable to crack the rebels’ resolve, the “revolutionaries” who once gathered in the Maiden have begun to turn on each other. Poroshenko, fearful of the rising power of the far-right militias who make up the backbone of his makeshift army, has ordered their dissolution – and the rightists are resisting.

A standoff between the Right Sector militia and Ukrainian police the other day culminated in a pitched battle as the rightists attacked police positions in Mukachevo, in western Ukraine, and took a six-year-old boy hostage. A dispute over control of the local cigarette smuggling operation had ended with two Right Sector thugs killed and seven others – it’s not clear which side they belonged to – injured. The rightists used grenade launchers to pulverize two police cars. Oh well, no worries, Washington will send replacements.... for both the cars and the launchers.

The big problem for the Kiev regime is that Right Sector and allied far-rightist militias are the core of their military operation against the east. Right Sector provided the muscle of the Maiden revolution, standing in the front lines against the widely feared Berkut special forces loyal to Yanukovich. If these thugs must be reined in, then the success of the “anti-terrorist” campaign is doubtful: yet Kiev is increasingly unwilling to pay the high price of appeasing their increasingly troublesome Praetorians.

The aftermath of the Mukachevo stand off was a clear victory for the rightists, who saw their leader, Dmytro Yarosh, a member of parliament, negotiating with the Interior Ministry – and Right Sector militia blocking the road from Kiev to the scene of the fighting. The result was an announcement from the Interior Ministry that the police chief of Mukachevo has been suspended, pending an “investigation” of the charges of aiding and abetting smuggling.

In short, Right Sector emerged victorious. Following up their victory, the group declared that a national referendum will be held – without gathering the required signatures, and under their sponsorship – on multiple questions, essentially demanding that their entire program for the nation be adopted. They call for a formal declaration of war against Russia, a complete blockade of the eastern provinces, martial law, and the legalization of their militias. Oh yes, and they also want the present government, up to and including Poroshenko, to be impeached.

Mired in debt, and rapidly sinking into an economic abyss, Ukraine is literally coming apart at the seams – and the ugly underside of the Maiden “revolution” is being exposed to the light of day. The most recent atrocity is the uncovering of a torture chamber used by members of the “Tornado” Battalion, another far-right grouping, in which militia members kidnapped, tortured, raped, and robbed citizens in the eastern Luhansk region, where the government is fighting to retain some modicum of control. Eight members of the Tornado militia were recently arrested and are being held by military prosecutors in Kiev: the Tornado “volunteers,” who mostly consist of ex-convicts, defend their actions by claiming that this is just retaliation because they uncovered a smuggling operation run by local officials – who, they say, are collaborating with

the rebels. They initially refused to lay down their arms and barricaded themselves into their camp.

The Aidar Battalion, also operating in eastern Ukraine, has been accused by Amnesty International of committing war crimes: that was in 2014, but the charges were largely ignored until the local governor began to complain. Aidar's leader, member of parliament Serhiy Melnychuk, of the ultra-nationalist Radical Party, has been stripped of immunity from prosecution and charged with kidnapping, issuing threats, and operating a criminal gang. Melnychuk, while admitting there was "some looting," attributed the dissolution of the Aidar Battalion by authorities to "Russian propaganda" and revealed that some members are still operating independently in Luhansk.

Then there's the openly neo-Nazi Azov Brigade, whose members sport fascist symbols from the World War II era, and whose leader, Andriy Biletsky, declares that the goal of his group is to "lead the White Races of the world in a struggle for their survival." There was so much bad publicity surrounding the Azov Battalion that the US Congress unanimously passed legislation forbidding any aid to the group – a provision, as this piece by Joseph Epstein in the *Daily Beast* points out, that is essentially unenforceable:

"In an interview with The Daily Beast, Sgt. Ivan Kharkiv of the Azov battalion talks about his battalion's experience with U.S. trainers and US volunteers quite fondly, even mentioning US volunteers engineers and medics that are still currently assisting them. He also talks about the significant and active support from the Ukrainian diaspora in the US As for the training they have and continue to receive from numerous foreign armed forces. Kharkiv says 'We must take knowledge from all armies... We pay for our mistakes with our lives.'

"Those US officials involved in the vetting process obviously have instructions to say that US forces are not training the Azov Battalion as such. They also say that Azov members are screened out, yet no one seems to know precisely how that's done. In fact, given the way the Ukrainian government operates, it's almost impossible."

Yes, your tax dollars are going to arm, train, and feed neo-Nazis in Ukraine. That's what we bought into when Washington decided to launch a regime change operation in that bedraggled corner of southeastern Europe. Your money is also going to prop up the country's war-stricken economy – albeit not before corrupt government officials rake their cut off the top.

Dmytro Korchynsky, who heads a group of several far-right "volunteers" gathered together in "St. Mary's Battalion," declares his goal of organizing a "Christian Taliban" that will put Ukraine in the forefront of an effort to "lead the crusades," adding: "Our mission is not only to kick out the occupiers, but also revenge. Moscow must burn."

That's a goal American neocons and their liberal enablers can get behind, but Korchynsky's invocation of the Taliban ought to make the rest of us step back from that precipice. For it was the US, in the throes of the last cold war, that coalesced, funded, trained, and armed what later became the Afghan Taliban – and we all know where that road led.

Once again, in our endless search for foreign monsters to destroy, we're creating yet more foreign monsters who will provide the next excuse for future crusades. It's a perpetual motion machine of foreign policy madness – and the War Party likes it that way.