**Can Ukrainian War Midwife a Revolution?**

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“Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war,” standing beside Caesar’s cadaver Mark Anthony screamed, beseeching Romans to seek revenge from the powerful assassins to whom he could merely allude as murderers in ambiguous words. Putin, however, needed no ambiguity to wage a war against Ukraine. There is nothing wrong with Ukraine’s stars deserving a devastating war, but its ruling class is an underling. Instead of neutrality, it has chosen the primrose path of dalliance with western interests, and now facing havoc.

Ukrainian story dates to the demise of the Soviet Union. The Russian neo-bourgeoisie unwilling to keep the union intact parted ways with other countries stitched together by the virtue of socialism to rid of the unnecessary economic baggage. Ukraine, as an independent state emerged out of the divorce or disintegration of the union and the ethnic hatred incited by the intelligentsia, especially of Baltic Republics. Prior to perestroika, and the US interference national question was non-existent in the USSR. The Soviet Union under Lenin had 5200 national territorial entities. Lenin addressed the national question immediately after the revolution declaring all non-Russian nationalities of the USSR as oppressed ones and assuring them equal rights in cultural and economic spheres. “The emergence of an idea of a nation (nationalities in USSR),” Czech Marxist historian Miroslav Hroch stated, “was brought forth by elite activists, usually historians.”

Ukraine, a backward agrarian society, had a long history of flirting with fascism and anti-Semitism. Between 1918 and 1921 during its brief history of independence, Ukraine, led by Symon Vasylyovych Petliura, an anti-communist and anti-Semite staged one of the biggest mass murders of Jews in European history. Despite being a close friend of Ze’ev Jabotinsky, a Zionist who fathered Irgun, a terrorist Jewish organization, Petilura oversaw a massacre of 50,000 to 20,0000 Jews. He was killed by an anarchist Jew but was replaced by Stepan Andriyovych Bandera, another Nazi collaborator.

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During the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Bandara proclaimed Ukraine a republic. The idea could not find favour with the Nazis. He was arrested but considering him an asset against the Soviets, the Nazis treated him tenderly. He returned the favour through his active participation in the Jewish holocaust and the massacre of Polish and Soviet civilians. After the war, he, like Wernher Braun and many other fascists, became a CIA collaborator and despite being a war criminal and Stalin’s insistence, wasn’t extradited to the USSR.

For western historians, Stalin was responsible for every evil. Holodomor, or the great famine, killing millions of Ukrainians was blamed on Stalin’s collectivization. A claim strongly contested by Grover Furr, an American professor for whom the entire story is a hoax, an invention of Ukrainian Nazi collaborationists. The reality for Grover is the opposite. Ukraine, under Stalin, became not only self-sufficient in grain production but also the breadbasket of the world. While despite proven fascists, Petilura and Bandara were resurrected by the Ukrainian government as national heroes. In 2009, Comintern Street was renamed Petilura Street and in 2016, Moscow Avenue became Stephen Bandara Avenue. In 2010, Bandara was awarded the title of Hero of Ukraine though it was annulled later.

Bandara, the hero of the Svoboda Party, a fascist political organization responsible for taking over the Ukrainian parliament by force and instrumental in creating Maidan square violence, is holding Ukraine hostage. The Azov battalion is involved in killing hundreds and thousands of Russian-speaking people in the Donbas region. Russian objectives of denazification, demilitarization, and neutralization in Ukraine mean getting rid of the fascists of the Azov battalion, weeding out NATO’s influence, and regime change.

What is happening in Ukraine can be understood by Lenin’s thesis of inter-capitalists-wars with the difference that the war in the case of Russia is forced upon a willing partner, eager to participate with the west in the accumulation of capital through dispossession but is denied membership of the club. Putin offered to join NATO, but the US wanted to have unrestricted access to Russian resources as it plundered them under Gorbachev’s perestroika and later under Yeltsin’s presidency, the era when vodka replaced Rubel as Russian currency. When Deng Xiaoping labelled Gorbachev “an idiot,” he wasn’t altogether wrong. Gorbacheva failed to understand the destructive dynamic of capitalism. If its military-industrial complex ceases to work the capitalist system becomes economically unsustainable immediately.

The last Soviet leader wasn’t a nincompoop but to become Lenin of the future as Vladislav Zubok, the author of Collapse, wants us to believe, he introduced perestroika as his version of New Economic Policy mixing it with western democracy and blindly followed the course dictated by its enemy, the US. Once Germany was reunited, and Warsaw Pact was disbanded the US promised to halt NATO’s eastward extension. But imperialism hardly keeps its promises, Gorbachev and Yeltsin found it soon at their peril.

NATO’s eastward expansion began aggressively. By 2009, ten European countries from Poland to Croatia Joined NATO. With Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey already under NATO’s sphere of influence, the addition of Ukraine and Georgia would complete Russian encirclement. These peripheral capitalist states have already opened their markets to American multinationals. Serbia refusing to open its gates was forced to capitulate through NATO’s bombing.

All wars are about property relations. In 1990, Ukraine passed a law banning not only foreign ownership of agricultural land but also its consolidation in a few oligarchs’ hands. The war has laid bare these lands to the American multinationals to expropriate the Ukrainian peasants, an important factor least mentioned by the media. Capitalism is about squeezing surplus value and reinvesting it to increase its volume several folds. Nothing suits better than investing in the military-industrial complex, which can absorb endless surplus and after inflicting destruction, leaves open the opportunity for construction.

‘The accumulation of capital, seen as a historical process” Rosa Luxemburg says, “employs force as a permanent weapon, not only at its genesis but further on down to the present day”. The US strategy against Russia remains unchanged; make the economy shriek through sanctions, arm the satellite state, back it with NATO-trained forces, and bring Russia to its knees.

Incidentally, both warring sides underestimated each other’s strength and resilience. Russians were prepared to counter the imperialist onslaught. The western sanctions became counter-productive and came back to hurt Europe. The European people reeling under rising prices of commodities and scarcity of gas have started to revolt. Russians, considering themselves liberators and expecting a cakewalk through Ukraine went in to fight with a small army and suffered setbacks, and are forced to mobilize additional 300,000 troops. Russia cannot afford to lose even at the cost of nuclear winter. The military-industrial complex of the US is making hey by selling lethal arms worth billions of $ to Ukraine. It’s eyeing Taiwan, another bonanza for its realization. The world is polarised, Asia, Africa, part of Latin America, and even the people of Europe are not interested in the imperialist war. Italy and Hungary want a truce with Russia, and only small insignificant Baltic states and Poland, the US client states are excited about it.

Force, Marx says, is the midwife of revolution, and so is a war where all class forces conscious or unconscious of their objectives use whatever force they deem necessary. One need not be Einstein to know that war will destroy Ukraine not only as a nation but also as a country because this is what the US and its allies want, to fight to the last Ukrainian. Russia, Scott Ritter, a former intelligence officer, and UN weapon inspector says, will not stop after integrating four regions but would take the rest of the Russian-speaking oblasts including Odessa. The upsurge in Europe including Russia will lead to the strengthening of the class consciousness of the masses. In the absence of the revolutionary parties, they may not midwife revolutions but can revive the prospect of them.

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