

The Fascist Marionettes of NATO in Ukraine



The meeting of Azov Regiment with representatives of NATO

By Maxim Nikolenko.

Fascism is not a structure which requires popular consensus on political decisions and negotiations. There is no need for a democratic majority to spearhead a fascist party into the realms of power, nor is there a need for popular support of fascist values in order for them to become an ideological beacon of the regime in power.

The New Generation

“The upbringing of a younger generation is the foundation for the future of Ukraine”, reads the title of an article which celebrates a new generation of children who choose a patriotic summer camp instead of “degrading” from computer games and television at home. Stacked with photographs which feature enthusiastic children posing in military uniforms, staring at the table with weapons, or performing some

kind of a group activity, the primary purpose of the article was to market a brand rather than give useful tips about the upbringing of children for the “future of Ukraine.” The article was published on what is still a low rated by Alexa (even in Ukraine) ‘news’ website, Azov Press.

A detailed description of the mentioned patriotic summer camp, however, is **widely available**. Children from 9 to 17 are encouraged to join a 12-day experienced of life in nature, where they will learn a package of “military lessons”, taught by “fighters and instructors” of Azov Regiment. The youngsters will learn how to use weapons and “provide first aid’, while also consuming “interactive lectures” and watching movies on the themes of history, military and nationalism, the aim of which is to underlining a place of “homeland” in the compass of human values. 3300 Hryvnias (about \$124) is the cost to attend the camp in 2017. Though a majority of parents will never afford the cost which is equivalent to their monthly salary, 3300 Hryvnias is a normal price (in fact, on the lower end) for a summer camp in Ukraine. Also, a 50% deduction is available for children whose parents had participated in combat against their countrymen in the war-ravaged east.

While scouring through the headlines about summer camps on **Azov Press**, I found at least 10 functioning units scattered across Ukraine. The number of those who received training in these facilities is unknown, though with up to 6 superseding 12-day sessions available each summer, the camps’ total capacity can easily exceed 1000 participants.

These camps wear innocent names such as Lunka (a hole), though they are training the youth wing of an openly neo-Nazi Azov Regiment. An ideological recipe of this recently-formed military apparatus strikes a viewer from the sight. The symbol of Azov Regiment is reminiscent of the Nazi Wolfsangel. To top it off, its founder and former military commander, before becoming a deputy in Kiev’s Rada in 2014, Andriy Biletsky, is a proud Nazi whose worldview can be summarized from the statements he made as a leader of the neo-Nazi Social-National Assembly. There, he emphasized the “historic mission” of “white races of the world in a final crusade for their survival... a crusade against the Semite-led untermenschen.”

That “final crusade” for now is on the offensive against a very specific enemy – Russians and Ukrainian citizens of the country’s Russian-speaking Donbass region.

Children are consuming the ‘wisdom’. The process of indoctrination prevails through the reiteration of slogans and songs. This summer, NBC News produced a **5-minute report** about one of Azov’s summer camps. Apart from capturing children undergoing an intense military training and participating in a simulation of real combat, the crew filmed youngsters collectively singing pieces such as the following:

Beat the Moskals!

Beat the Moskals!

Pile up the dead!

‘Moskal’ is an ethnic slur used in Ukraine to describe Russians.

After consuming enough information, their wish for Moskals is simple: Let Moscow lay in ruins, we don’t give a damn. Death, death to Moskals!

According to the NBC report, the Azov Regiment and its youth camps are “controversial.” That is the climax of what the narrator of an American news outlet dares to conclude about the content, In fact, the overall message of the report is somewhat sympathetic, explaining to the Western audience that the nationalist aspect of Azov is caused primarily by Russia’s ‘oppression’ of Ukrainians. Thus, the current mission is to “hold on to whatever Ukrainian identity they (Ukrainians) did have, and still, do have.” Consequently, the scenes of children singing death songs to ‘Moskals” and wishing ruin to Moscow reflects their “deep idea of Ukraine-Russian history.”

This is not Charlottesville and the corporate NBC news is not President Trump the odious, thus there is no pressure to name the organization for what it represents, to “call out white supremacy.”

The Guardia, another liberal Western news outlet who visited the camps, concludes

in a 13-minute **documentary film**: “Over the next year, Azov plans to expand the summer camps that it can host thousands of kids from all over Ukraine.” The documentary referred to Azov as ‘ultra-nationalist’, amplifying to the audience that they only represent a small minority of Ukrainians, though exploited by Russia to justify its “false claim” that the country’s government retains fascist-leanings.

If calling out the organization for what it represents is such a difficult task for the ‘liberal’ Anglo-American media platforms, then there is no hope in seeing them conduct an investigation and asking difficult questions, though reasons for that to be done are plentiful.

It should be vivid from the sight that the Nazi organization is secured financially and maintains positive relations high authorities, as no apparent obstruction comes for Azov’s expansion of youth camps and ideological indoctrination of children.

The aim of projects spearheaded by Azov (and other nationalist organizations) is openly stated: it is to build a ‘new generation’ of Ukrainian nationalists, with values that come straight from another century, a historic period of Ukraine which is intentionally ignored in the West.

The Subjugated History

Unveiling chapters of the subjugated history would bring some interesting revelations about the actors who are attempting to shape the values of Ukrainians in the 21st century. The recently formed Azov, along with other Ukrainian nationalist organizations such as the Right Sector, date their origin to the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, founded in 1929 by Yevhen Konovalets, a fascist figure with firm ties to the Mussolini’s Italy and in progress to Nazi Germany. Other notable figures, Stepan Bandera (head of OUN from 1933) and Roman Shukhevych (leader of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army, a military wing of OUN), were also fascists who maintained a close alliance with the Third Reich.

The main theme of OUN ideologues was to carve out a Ukrainian ethnostate from the

territories controlled by Poland and the Soviet Union. When Nazi troops advanced into the territories of USSR on June 22, 1941, the Ukrainian nationalists had a window of opportunity open. On June 30, 1941, The Act of Restoration of the Ukrainian State was enabled in the country's western city of Lviv. Though OUN pursued an independent ethnostate, the sovereignty came with limitations **underlined in the Act.**

“The newly formed Ukrainian state will work closely with the National-Socialist Greater Germany, under the leadership of its Fuhrer Adolf Hitler which is establishing a new order in Europe and the world and is helping the Ukrainian People to free itself from Moscovite occupation.”

For Adolf Hitler, the Ukrainian nationalists represented nothing more than marionettes, who would govern the region and its inhabitants as a colony of “Greater Germany.” Many in the senior establishment of OUN resigned to that status. Stepan Bandera, who led the pro-independence wing of OUN, had quickly soured his relations with Berlin. He was arrested in 1941 and was soon transported to be housed in a privileged section of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Indeed, Reichstag did not seek strong leadership to govern its colonies.

Interestingly, Ukrainian nationalists weighted more action to ethnically purify their quasi-state than to seek independence from both the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. It is worth taking a look at the constitution which was introduced following the start of Operation Barbarossa. Drafted before the German invasion by theorist Mykola Stsiborskyi, who sided with the idea that Ukraine should retain limited independence from Berlin, the **constitution proclaims:**

Article 1.

“Ukraine is a sovereign, authoritarian, totalitarian, professionally legal state called the “Ukrainian State”

Article 2.

“The structure of the Ukrainian state is based on the principles of nationalocracy.

Nationalocracy is a power of the nation within the state, based on organized solidarity cooperation of all useful social strata of the population, united in accordance with their social and professional-production functions - in representative bodies of state administration."

In simplified language, this framework is strikingly similar to that of Nazism. The grotesque practices of OUN towards those they considered as non-Ukrainians resembles similarities, too. Depending on the source, at least 100,000 Poles and Belarusians were killed by the regiments of Ukrainian Insurgent Army, in atrocious massacres which occurred in Volhynia and Eastern Galicia. Local collaborators had also supervised Germans in conducting a mass slaughter of Jews in Kiev's Babi Yar. 33,771 Jewish men, women, and children were massacred between September 29 and September 30 of 1941. In addition, at least 150,000 Jews, Russians, Communists, and prisoners were killed before the Nazi occupation was crushed by the Red Army.

Following the capitulation of Germany, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army was virtually dismantled, with small remaining units continuing a guerrilla insurgency against the Soviet Union up until the dawn of the 1950s.

Fostered Revival

This tragic chapter of the Second World War had intentionally been forgotten.

The senior OUN's security members were spared from the Nuremberg trials, with some even receiving **safe passage** to the United States for the reason of "Cold War necessities." Such an unhealthy collaboration of the West with Ukrainian Nazis went onward, reviving dramatically following a collapse of the Soviet Union.

The extent of Washington's activities in the modern Ukraine (including an unspoken support for the extreme right-wing organization), was revealed by the Obama administration's Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Victoria Nuland.

“Since Ukraine’s independence in 1991, the United States has supported Ukrainians as they build democratic skills and institutions, as they promote civic participation and good governance: all of which are preconditions for Ukraine to achieve its European aspirations”, declared Secretary Nuland **during her speech** at the US-Ukraine Foundation Conference on December 13, 2013, a time of growing demonstrations in the capital Kiev. That support for “democratic institutions” is a euphemism for Washington’s investment of “over 5 billion dollars” into the activities that would shape Ukrainian politics away from Russia and closer to the United States.

A nationalist opposition with its reactionary fascist elements – as it was a reliable ally to the Nazis against the Soviet Union – has become a reliable partner of Washington in its regional ambitions against Russia. During the bloodbath on the Maidan Square in 2014, the nationalist elements were active on the front lines in clashes with the security forces. Praised by Washington diplomats and Anglo-American media resources, they implemented a government coup against the country’s elected President Viktor Yanukovich, bringing the far-right pro-Western voices from the streets into the seats of Rada.

For the viewers and readers of BBC, CNN, the New York Times, and the Guardia, it was a triumph of democracy and freedom against the **‘barbarians’**.

On the ground, however, it was an undemocratic rise of the far-right.

Ideologues of this modern surge of nationalism retain allegiance to the old fascists of the twentieth century. Indeed, one of the popular slogans of the far-right states: “Bandera, Shukhevych are heroes of Ukraine!”

The message is coupled with a chant: “Glory to the Nation! Death to the enemies!”

The new pro-Western government amplifies. Formed from an alliance of President Poroshenko’s party with a ‘mainstream’ far-right National Front (the second largest party in Rada), and representing dozens of deputies from smaller factions such as the fascist Svoboda Party and the National Corps led by Andriy Biletsky: the

Ukrainian Rada though pro-Western and economically neoliberal on the surface, is also extensively cooperative with fascists on the key decisions concerning internal politics.

From the very beginning, before the political alliances were formed, and before the oligarch, Petro Poroshenko became Ukraine's President: the post-coup government immediately went on to ratify the policies of the right-wing advocates, **abolishing a law** which allows the Russian-speaking regions to make Russian their second official language.

After the Russian-speaking industrial Donbass rebelled and sought autonomy from an increasingly hostile, both politically and **economically** Kiev, the fascist organizations had formed military Regiments, the 'volunteer militias', as they are known to the Anglo-American press. Receiving an abundance of weapons and a green light from the government, these fascist units went on to fight and kill their countrymen in what is still officially referred in Ukraine as Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO).

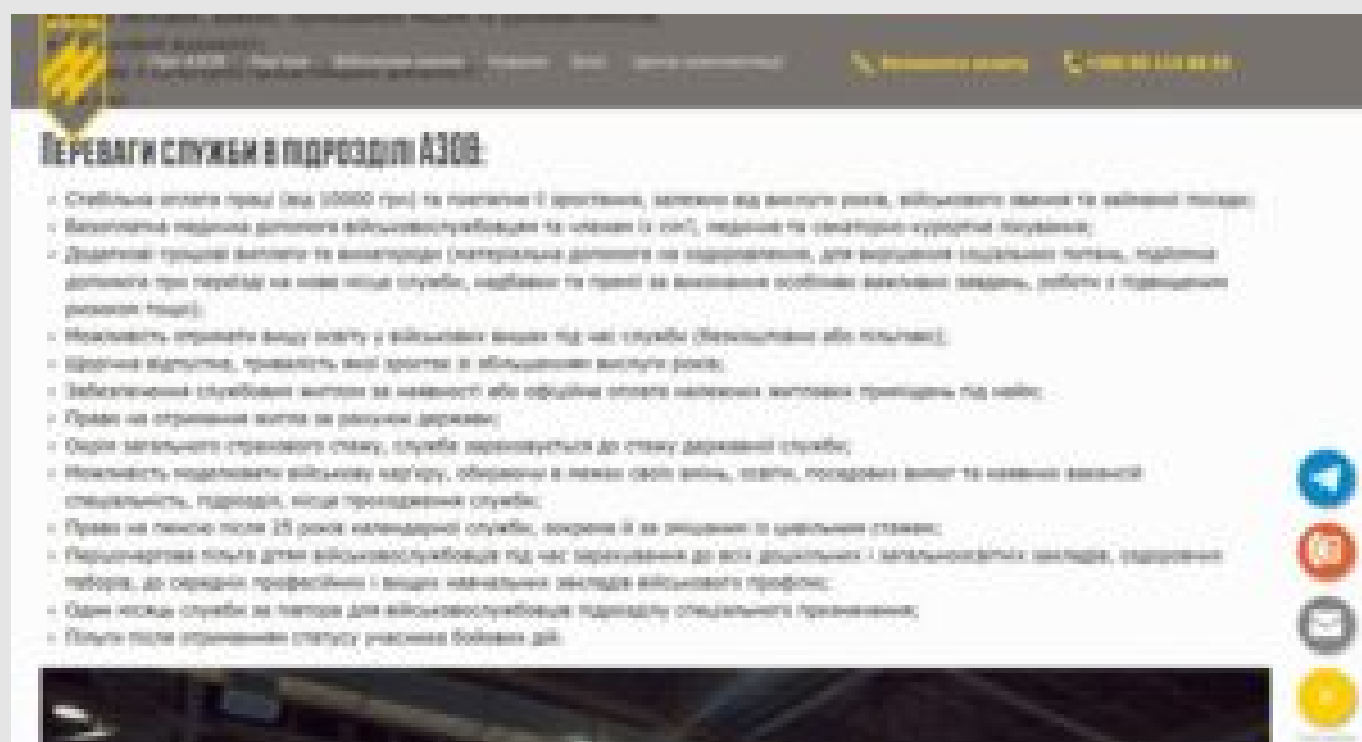
Support from the Highest Realms of Power

There is quite a distinction between the fascist regiments and the **regular divisions** of Ukrainian Army. The fascists receive higher wages. They are well-equipped and their training is generously financed through the channels of government officials and Ukrainian oligarchs. According to **the local press**, the members of Dnipro Regiment, for instance, were the highest paid militants at the start of ATO. Their monthly allowance of 6000 Hryvnias for combatants and 10,000 for commanders, represents an unreachable dream for thousands of mobilized recruits of the regular army, who often struggle to receive their salary on time, a meager sum of 1300 hryvnias.

The reason for such a divide is simple: Dnipro is a privately-owned militia which received funding from the former governor of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, Ihor Kolomoyskyi, the 6th **richest man** in Ukraine. There are also reports that Dnipro received **training** from Romanian and Georgian military 'advisers'.

No other militant unit, however, has gained as much prestige in the country's security apparatus as the neo-Nazi Azov Regiment. While officially it is incorporated into the Ukrainian National Guard, Azov is autonomous in its activities and receives separate funding. When I searched for an official website of this quasi-army, I discovered a well-designed **recruitment platform**, glittering with high-quality images and promotion videos, captured in style of a Hollywood blockbuster trailer,

The young recruits are presented with a list of benefits they will obtain for serving with the Nazis. According to the list of "advantages", the recruits will receive a 'stable monthly allowance' starting from 10,000 hryvnias (\$372) and up. Militiamen are also qualified for free housing from the state schemes; they can pursue the education in military academies, of course, free of charge, and they (including their families) are to be guaranteed a waived medical insurance.



List of benefits offered for serving with the Azov Regiment.

Even if the list is prepared with a degree of exaggeration, the benefits are enormous for a country where an average retired citizen receives no more than \$50 a month in pension, where thousands of people are unemployed, and where many adults

struggle to find a job which will provide them enough money to sustain the household expenses. Ukraine is the second poorest country in Europe. Since 2014, the GDP per **capita fell** to \$2185, making Ukraine rank below developing countries such as Indonesia, Algeria and Sri Lanka.

Indeed, when the country experiences an unprecedented decline in living standards, the Nazi organizations enjoy generous financial support and prestige. Just like Dnipro, the Azov has its 'roof' in the government, represented by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Arsen Avakov.

No wonder Azov is having no shortage in cash to construct summer camps across the country to discipline the mindset of younger generation; no wonder its fighters had received high-level recognition for their service, including an award from the President himself, when he visited Mariupol in 2014, a city which Azov has been praised for recapturing from pro-Russian resistance.

"I see you as the real protectors. I'd like to thank you for your service", stated Poroshenko to congratulate the Nazis, with **a foreign film crew of the liberal American VICE** news capturing the moment. This incident in Mariupol went unnoticed by the liberal "mainstream". In the geopolitical arena, the oligarch Poroshenko and his "real protectors" are the good guys – the marionettes of Washington and NATO.

In fact, the North American Treaty Organization had its own private moment with the Nazis, when a group NATO representatives visited their headquarters, learning about the organization's "structure" and discussing ways of "improving" the skills of Azov for "implementation of military tasks." Not a single corporate media outlet had reported on the meeting. Ironically, the Nazism themselves **broke the silence** by posting a video of NATO's visit on their YouTube Channel.

Amidst an absence of coverage, the connection between NATO and Azov extends beyond a mere visit. Here is how the Azov's recruitment website describes **its school** of sergeants, named after a fascist, Yevhen Konovalts: "The sergeant school of Colonel Yevhen Konovalts was established in mid-April 2016 to train instructors and

commanders of the lower level” in accordance with the “standards of NATO.”

Practical **lessons** in that school, according to Azov Press, are taught by highly-experienced instructors from “Georgia” (a country). An overwhelming majority of these military instructors received “education” in the United States, “under a program Green Berets.”

These revelation, however, are irrelevant, unworthy of investigating and reporting.

The Impact on Society

An organized effort is underway to rewrite the history and transform the values of Ukrainian society.

Ukraine no longer celebrates heroes of its past, the millions of those who died in liberation struggle against the Nazis. Seventy-two years since the first Victory Day was celebrated on May 9, the capital city has **welcomed** its veterans of war with red-and-black flags of the Right Sector and crowds of aggressive nationalists. While joining the march of ‘immortal regiment’ (commemorating those who died before victory and those who fought in the war), veterans and their families were **intimidated** and rained with abusive language. They were labeled “communist.”

The Victory Day no longer falls in line with the ‘correct’ interpretation of history.

‘Annihilation’ of the Soviet past is spearheading as well. It is no longer safe for citizens to display publicly the symbols of communist ideology and Russian culture. Statues of the Soviet leader, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, have been **dismantled** in all cities, towns and villages controlled by the government. Flourishing on the ruins of condemned history is the fascist ghost. The OUN and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army are new heroes of the ‘mainstream’.

From the Western perspective, all these processes reflect a vibrant “cultural revolution.”

Indeed, frightening as their rise may seem, the Ukrainian fascists still represent a small minority of the country's voting population, though emboldened enormously by the government which exploits their ideology to retain the post-coup status quo.

Amidst an economic crisis which has driven millions of people into extreme poverty, the corrupt pro-Western government still maintains its grip on power, injected with billions of dollars from the International Monetary Fund, in return for implementing a package of grotesque neoliberal "reforms", a precondition for Ukraine's "European aspirations." Feeling the impact of those reforms and paying the debts accumulated by the government from predatory economic institutions of the West, is the 'silent majority' of Ukraine: the millions of its impoverished citizens.

Nationalists retain no agenda of easing the struggles of their countrymen. The mere purpose of far-right ideologues is to discipline the population ideologically, a task they are accomplishing with an apparent success.

Members of fascist organizations, for instance, were the first to **establish barricades** in front of the banks owned by the Russian government, before the entities were officially sanctioned by Kiev. In similar fashion, they **facilitated** implementation of a trade embargo on Donbass region in the east; they were on the front lines promoting a failed government **attempt** to block Ukrainians from accessing the Russian websites, and they applauded Kiev for **enabling a bill** which severely limits the ability of children of minority-groups to study the school curriculum in their native language.

And they are calling for a continuation of the war which has already claimed over 10,000 lives.

Distancing away from all attributes of Russian culture and the Soviet past is the credo of Ukrainian fascists. Their ambition goes intact with the agenda of pro-Western government, which receives diplomatic protection from the American empire and its European allies. Thus the donors of Ukrainian marionettes have been ignoring and will continue to ignore in the future, the fascist shadow of their clients.

Just like the regime in Kiev, Washington is interested in maintaining the status quo.

Victims of this cynical alliance are the 42 million men, women and children who call Ukraine home.