

Commemorating the Odessa Massacre: Appeal of the Initiative Group for Democracy and Internationalism in Ukraine

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Global Research, April 26, 2015

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

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Ukrainian anti-fascists are calling on people around the world to mark May 2 as a day of commemoration of those who were killed in the trade union building in Odessa.

On May 2, 2014 there was a bloody massacre in Odessa where, though data is incomplete, at least 48 people were killed. Some of them were burned alive in the House of Trade Unions.

The organizers of the massacre were radical Ukrainian nationalists and fascists who support the regime established in the Kiev after the coup in February 2014. Their opponents were the participants of the Antimaydan movement opposed to Ukrainian fascism. They belonged to different political tendencies, but opposition to Ukrainian fascism united them. It was they who were the main victims of the massacre on the May 2. Fleeing from the crowd of aggressive and armed fascists which greatly outnumbered them, the Antimaydan activists tried to take refuge in the House of Trade Unions located near their camp. They were largely without weapons, as they consistently preferred peaceful forms of protest. The enemy attacked the House of Trade Unions with Molotov cocktails, igniting a fire that caused many of those inside the building to flee outside. There, angry Ukrainian fascists beat and killed them. Others who observed this remained inside until they either burned to death, suffocated or jumped out of windows to their deaths. Others who remained inside were hunted down and murdered in cold blood. Local fire service deliberately did not go to the assistance of the desperate people and when it finally arrived, the fascists did not let the fire trucks or firefighters approach the burning building.

The ruling government of Ukraine is doing everything to hide and distort the truth about this crime. The official list of dead people has not been published yet. The results of forensic examination of the causes of deaths are classified and were not disclosed until recently. None of the perpetrators of the massacre has been arrested; the state prosecutor's office deliberately ignores numerous videos proving their guilt. Instead, people who tried to defend the House of Trade Unions have been arrested and put on trial. Though the investigation found no evidence of their guilt, the court refuses to set them free. Official propaganda since the day of tragedy has spread lies like "the House of Trade Unions was not protected by people from Odessa but by citizens of Transnistria and Russian saboteurs", calls these people terrorists and separatists even though the leaders of the Odessa's "Antimaydan" never called for the separation of the Odessa region from Ukraine. But various supporters of this Kiev regime replicate this lie all over the world.

The Odessa tragedy is just one act in the civil war the Kiev fascists launched last spring

against its own people that. This is not the only event of its kind. The atrocities of the fascists on May 9, 2014 in Mariupol, massive bloodshed in the Donbass, sadistic treatment of war prisoners, deliberate destruction of vital facilities in the Donbass, the recent excesses of Ukrainian soldiers in Konstantinovka (Kostyantynivka) – all of them are the links of the same chain. This is a manifestation of the bloody totalitarian nature of the regime in Kiev, established in the heart of Europe with the blessing of western political leaders. But the Odessa massacre became a symbol of these atrocities. In Odessa, the Kiev regime's political opponents asserted their own rights without weapons, by peaceful means and they were ruthlessly suppressed with astonishing cruelty and cynicism. The task of all progressive forces of the world is to demonstrate their condemnation and rejection of such methods.

The Kiev regime wants to forcibly impose on the entire population of Ukraine its system of values which totally rejects the Soviet period in the history of Ukraine. It is based on the traditions of Ukrainian integral nationalism, which is the local Ukrainian variant of fascist ideology. These ideas of integral nationalism inspired such figures as Stepan Bandera. For a significant part of Ukrainian society, such attitudes are unacceptable. That is why opposition appeared. Despite all the repression, people have been fighting against the reactionaries and actively looking for an alternative. But the forces of resistance in Ukraine are split, and some of them are not guided by consistently democratic principles. Some of them receive help from Russian nationalists and therefore think that the alternative to Ukrainian fascism is Russian nationalism. But this is wrong and a dead end road. Therefore, the solidarity of international left forces with the liberation struggle against the Kiev regime will help the people of see they have friends and strengthen the democratic tendencies in the camp of resistance.

Finally, solidarity of leftist and internationalist forces is important not only for Ukraine. Now we see the rise of right-wing reactionary movements around the world. In many European countries, neo-fascists are growing in popularity, the youth are joining their parties, and they are gaining more and more votes. Totalitarianism has intensified everywhere and gone on the offensive. The civil war in Ukraine is just one of many episodes of offensive of international reaction forces. But this episode is very revealing. Ukraine is a European country and it in this European country that for the first time in the 21st century that fascists have entered a government while fascist paramilitaries have received legal status in the army and other state authorities. We can resist this attack on our principles and values together, combining our efforts all round the world.

Therefore, we propose to make May 2 a day of international solidarity in defense of democracy and internationalism in Ukraine. To this end, we urge the leftist forces around the world to hold in early May actions of solidarity with the liberation struggle of the working masses of Ukraine. This can be a picket, a march, a meeting, a round table and any other action which would be considered appropriate by activists not indifferent to the problems of Ukraine. From our side, our initiative group will contribute to the dissemination of information about these actions in the media.

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