

“Defending Democracy” Through Fascist Nationalism and Suicidal Military Spending? No, Thanks.

By [Enzo Pellegrin](#)

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If Ennio Flaiano were to be called upon today to pronounce on the Italian mainstream on the subject of war, he would surely come out with one of his striking paradoxes:

“It is not so much what I see or read that makes an impression on me, but what I hear: that unbearable noise of nails climbing up the glass.”

On the loudspeakers of the media hegemony the defense at all costs of the words and deeds of the Ukrainian government has been broadcasted in unified networks, whatever the means used by this one, all in view of a costly militarization of the whole Europe, already in dire straits for the economic crisis.

The tasty interview with a commander of the Azov Battalion – composed of nationalists of the Ukrainian ultra-right, who confesses to “reading Kant” to their soldiers, the appearance of the band of “Kiev calling” singing with Banderas’ T-shirts, have discovered more than one nerve of the dominant narrative.



Once it emerged that the political horse on which it was counted allowed an unparalleled accessibility to organizations inspired by Nazism, ethnic nationalism, collaborators of the Third Reich worshipped as “national heroes” with monuments, it started the race to deny the evidence, to reduce a phenomenon that the Ukrainian government first refuses to reduce, or to use consolatory and justificationist narratives, disconnected from reality, such as the one that “the Nazis exist on both sides.

It should be made the usual premise, a must in these times in order not to see one’s own reasoning delegitimized to typhus: the nature of Russia governed by Putin is clearly an oligarchic regime in which the dominant historical bloc (composed of a political bloc allied to precise private economic blocs and controlled by the state) uses all the tools of propaganda, social management and repression for the perpetuation of power. There is no one who can deny that every form of political alternative is subject to strong repression, even when it is a matter of claiming simple democratic access.

However, it could be said, such an authoritarian course is not nowadays functioning only in Russia, but since a long time it characterizes almost all Western nations, which would like to censor it. Our shores are also home to a power managed in a manner increasingly independent of real democratic mechanisms, whether by strong men - or clans - as in Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, by plutocratic and oligarchic pillars as in the USA, or by technocratic elites as in Italy. If Russia shows off an unrepresentable Khadirov in Chechnya, one has to wonder if the clans of Kosovo, Orbán or Erdoğan are not equally unrepresentable. And one could go on.

However, this is not the point. Returning to Ukraine, never before in a state, in Russia or in the West, we have seen such an agility, cultural and political weight, entrusted to political organizations that blatantly draw inspiration from ideologies, characters, worldviews,

explicitly fascist or Nazi. Words and works that in the German penal code would have been a pure crime of apologia for the Third Reich, or the object of a ban, at least until the half-reversal made with the judgment of the Federal Supreme Court of January 17, 2017, which rejected the request to ban the NPD (a neo-Nazi party), only because of minimal electoral importance.

Despite the fact that in the whole area of Eastern Europe movements inspired by ethnic nationalism or reinvigorated inspirations of Pan-Slavism have been reborn, neither in Moscow, nor in the ultra-atlantic Poland has anyone ever allowed themselves to inaugurate monuments and celebrate as a national hero a collaborator of the horrors of the Third Reich and its SchutzStaffel like Stepan Banderas. In the same sense, we have never gone so far as to integrate into the regular army paramilitary militias formed by neo-Nazi groups, celebrating their hierarchs as heroes of the resistance even when their acts have turned out to be real crimes in wartime, such as the taking of civilian hostages in many of the last war scenarios, or in peacetime, such as the massacre of the House of Trade Unions in Odessa.

But, if the narrative of blatantly claimed fascism were not enough, it would suffice to pay attention to the practices and laws directly put in place by the President of Ukraine and his government, in past and recent times.

Since the dawn following the 2014 coup, communists were outlawed (they will be permanently outlawed since 2015 after the appeal against the ban was rejected). With a decree a few days ago, as many as 10 opposition parties (representing 20%) in Parliament were banned:

Opposition Platform

– For Life (43 deputies), Pan-Ukrainian Union “Fatherland” (26 deputies), Opposition Bloc (6 deputies), Shariy’s Party (named after the blogger who animates it), Left Opposition, Union of Left Forces, Ukrainian Progressive Socialist Party, Socialist Party of Ukraine, Socialists, and Vladimir Saldo Bloc that had in the Ruthenian Rada another 43 deputies.

At the same time all national communication was gagged by unifying the television networks into a single network under government control.

Measures of this kind can be compared to the so-called fascist laws: the law that obliged the press to have a responsible director of prefectural-governmental approval (1926) and the institutionalization of the Great Council of Fascism as the supreme constitutional authority of the Kingdom (1928).

With reference to the issue of the Doneckij Bassein, it is certainly not peregrine to suspect that separatism was to some extent instrumentalized by the Russian government according to its own interests. However, we do not yet have adequate documents to ascertain what Russia’s role was in these political processes.

On the other hand, we have sufficient elements to observe that the alleged Ukrainian reaction took the form of a war that lasted eight years.

The offensive against the Ukrainian government has been carried out by ultranationalist and paramilitary formations with methods that aimed at the annihilation of an ethnic and/or cultural expression (Russian and Russian-speaking), with a massacre that, according to the

most conservative estimates (Report of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees) concerns at least 3404 civilians (without “part”, because civilians are considered as such) and 6500 separatist insurgents. A war of eight years that the mainstream likes to define low intensity, but certainly high numbers.

The persecution of these populations, by formations that were inspired by fascism and Nazism, generated many counter-pushes of reaction and solidarity, pushing many sincere anti-fascists to rush to the aid of the attacked populations, in the name of a sincere ideal, and of an unusual and transparent courage, as it was for the case of the communist from Veneto Edy Ongaro, today remembered by his comrades of the Collective Red Star North East and by communiqués of various organizations, even inside a garrison against every imperialist war.

The Ukrainian government has never made a mystery of its will to “Ukrainize” the territory of the independent republics, with measures aimed at the prohibition of the Russian language, followed by military confrontation, acts aimed at the deportation of the Russian-speaking population in ways reminiscent of the burned houses of Serbs in the Croatian territories, or the Italian occupation of Yugoslavia, with the expropriation of the lands of Slovenes and Croats and the prohibition to speak languages other than Italian.

In the face of all this, as inexcusable as war may be, as much as it may be – as it almost always is – an expression of conflicts between imperialist interests, what does it take for certain self-styled anti-fascists in our Institutional Politics to understand the unacceptably ethnic and fascist nature of Ukrainian nationalism? What does it take not to confuse it with the Resistance, and to reveal the warmongering and suicidal project of feeding the ongoing conflict by sending weapons and by recklessly increasing military expenditures, without any reflection on the objectives of such a defense policy?

The immoderate attempts of Italian television to humanize or clear customs of this widespread and irredeemably piteous Nazism could be dismissed with a joke describing their ridiculous response: “Alright they are Nazis, but they are “our” Nazis....”. However, the issue deserves more serious reflection, because it is an attitude that affects the very future of the working classes of Europe, who bear the brunt of the damage of military and economic warfare.

Such ridiculous insistence on painting the donkey as a zebra reveals a far more serious symptom within the Western ruling classes: the inability to read the events that occur beyond the false consciousness of the dominant ideologies. All this is associated with an inability to put to use the teaching or the suggestions that may come from past historical processes.

Such an inability, according to some historians, would have occurred several times in the history of the opposing blocs. When, at the end of 1979, the United States decided to deploy new nuclear weapons in five European countries, the then USSR was already spending an average of 12% of its GDP on military defense.

A remarkable figure if proportioned to the wealth produced, taking into account that the US itself came to spend 9% of its GDP in 1963 alone. The socialist bloc also suffered from the need to get into debt with Western countries for the importation of food and, at times, as in the case of East Germany, also energy needs. Almost all the countries adhering to the

Warsaw Pact were heavily supported out of necessity by Soviet finances and unfortunately they were at the same time forced to go heavily into debt with Western countries, adopting at the same time a policy of sacrifice for the repayment of debts, a policy that generated social discontent and opened the way for the infiltration of Western secret services in the creation of protest movements, such as that of Lech Walesa, also financed with the laundering of dirty money coming from the hidden centers of power headed by Banco Ambrosiano and the Vatican.

In such a situation, the arms race led by the United States led to the progressive weakening and destruction of the Soviet bloc.

Western Europe today suffers from similar problems and a great dependence on several opposing blocs in the world. Inserted for historical reasons in the military vassalage led by the U.S. empire, however, finds its economic balance strongly dependent on other blocs, both for energy needs, both for exports/imports of manufactured goods. Its economy and its social substrate have been severely undermined by the past economic crisis and it is not so absurd to assume that a new policy of rearmament would lead to a new political suicide of the European entities, which would end up wearing themselves out in the name of the interests of island security (and also economic) of the United States.

This walking on the knife's edge was well understood by the past political ruling classes, who worked to manage this difficult balance. A few days ago, the ubiquitous Zelensky did not even miss an attack on Angela Merkel for her past allegedly pro-Russian policy.

The former Bundeskanzlerin replied to the Ruthenian president that "it was right to exclude Ukraine from NATO", as a witness to the fact that Europe was well aware of the need to balance powers. Moreover, a remnant of that past policy has been seen even within this crisis, with the positions of France and Germany.

The WSJ has recently revealed that a plan in extremis containing the Russian requests had been transmitted to Zelensky by Sholtz, informing him that the western information gave for sure the invasion plan in case an agreement was not found, despite the fact that in front of the entire media world they declared themselves convinced of the contrary. Zelensky, as a good amplifier of NATO interests, refused. The European inertia towards these unreasonable and uncomfortable positions has contributed to generate what then happened.

This is why the absurd media coverage of the words and deeds of the Ukrainian leaders reveals an astonishing short-sightedness of the current European ruling classes. Such an attitude is so absurd, when it ends up adopting policies of Russophobia (persecution of Russian culture, which is not Putin's culture) completely similar to the ridiculous efforts to eliminate French and Anglo-Saxon culture from the Italian intellect pursued in our country by the little teacher from Predappio. Here we are not at "our fascists", here you become fascists altogether, without the need for a membership card.

At the time of writing, the media war is raging with the guest of honor the inevitable war crime that always appears in conflicts of this type. Each side is fundamentally certain of the guilt of the other or of the blatant fabrication by the other side, according to logics that, in time of media and military war, cannot be supported by an acceptable evaluation of the facts, because the facts at this time, are difficult - if not impossible - to ascertain and evaluate, due to the work of the same parties in conflict.

However, one certainty always remains: wars, especially imperialist wars, always bring with them every kind of horror, because in wars every limit to barbarism is by definition broken. The weight of imperialist conflicts is borne almost entirely by the popular classes, while the advantages are gradually enjoyed by the ruling classes, in a scenario in which, in both fields, the word democracy and the interest of the people are only puppets moved to clear the exploited classes of the sacrifices they will have to make, once again, so that the wealth they produce is managed and appropriated by blocks of economic and political power.

The “main enemy” in this case is the lack of organization of the exploited classes according to their own independent interests. Where these organize, as in the case of the boycott by the workers of Pisa, or of the Greek Railroaders against the sending of weapons to Ukraine, the imperialist war is opposed without the need to yield to the interests of one of the parties to the conflict.

The request that the Italian ruling classes propose today is to defend a democracy that they insist on not granting with the support of an ethnic and fascist nationalism, with a rearmament that will lead to the suicide of the economy on the shoulders of the popular and exploited classes.

Enough to answer: no, thanks.

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Enzo Pellegrin was born in Ivrea (Italy) on 10.2.1969. He has a degree in Law and works as a criminal lawyer in Turin, Italy. Democratic and socialist activist. He writes and translates from English, French, German and Croatian currently on the Italian periodical on line: resistenze.org. His articles have also been published by the Italian magazines: “contropiano.org”, “sinistrainrete.info”, “laboratorio-21.it” (laboratory for the socialism of the XXI century), and also on “Il Fatto Quotidiano” on line. Currently he is also an active volunteer for the association for the treatment of war victims, peace and disarmament “Emergency”.

Featured image: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (centre) attends the drills of the Ministry of Internal Affairs during his working trip to the Kherson region, Ukraine, Saturday, February 12, 2022

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