

The Role of Fascism and the Oligarchs in Ukraine

Transcript of Interview with Sergey Kirichuk of Ukraine's Borotba Party

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[borotba.org](#) and the Last Defense

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

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*The following interview with [The Last Defense](#) is with the main spokesperson of Ukraine's Borotba Party, **Sergey Kirichuk**. Borotba is "a left-wing, antifascist Ukrainian political party fighting for the solidarity of Ukrainians".*

The interview addresses the oligarchical forces and right-wing groups operating in Kiev, including Svoboda, EuroMaidan and Right Sector. It analyses the players and pawns of the current Ukrainian Parliament (Rada), and discusses possible outcomes of the crisis. You can listen to the full interview [here](#).

[emphasis added by GR]

By Haneul Na'avi and Michael Bielawski

TRANSCRIPT

HANEUL: Sergey, can go ahead and tell us a little about yourself, what you do with your organization, and please further elaborate?

SERGEY: Yeah, the Borotba movement is a young political movement. We have been operating for three years in Ukraine and we started our activities from the unifying of many left-wing groups and common people in Ukraine that are fighting against capitalism and oligarchy. Ukraine is a country totally controlled by a few rich families that we used to call oligarchs, and they are doing whatever they want—changing political parties and regimes, and when we have some kind of election here, we have everything under the control of a few families. So, fighting this system is one of our aims and we are trying to do our best to change the political situation in Ukraine. Actually, we are just a left-wing political movement.

HANEUL: You say [the organization] is basically aligned with Communist values and principles, and you're trying to form international partnerships and friendships with other people, regardless of race and gender, and you're trying to get rid of the fascist element, or at least to expose it. Now, according to your website, [Borotba.org](#), can you please give us a definition of what you think fascism is, in the eyes of Ukrainians as well as in Europe?

SERGEY: What we have here in Ukraine, and all over Eastern and Western Europe; we have political change. We don't have traditional fascist movements anymore. We have so-called new far-right movements. That means these people have changed [throughout] history and now they are trying to use more Populism. They are talking more about the problems of common people; about working class people. So, you see, when you use some symbols of

Adolf Hitler or German Nazis, or Benito Mussolini and his fascist party, you will not be successful, of course. That means that you should find some other forms and they are finding these forms in Ukraine, especially. They are trying to be very bourgeois; they are trying to be a part of the Ukrainian political establishment. So, **Ukrainian fascist are of two kinds: One is a kind of bourgeois fascist that is represented in Ukrainian parliament and in [the] Ukrainian government, and the other kind is street fascism, which are in military clothes patrolling our streets, and they are really angry. They are not under somebody's control, and they are really aggressive and really dangerous.**

HANEUL: Wow, that's an interesting portrait of what's going on there. **Which of those would you say is bourgeois? Is it Svoboda?**

SERGEY: **It's Svoboda; it was a very small political party in the West of Ukraine. Their name was [formally] the Social-Nationalist Party of Ukraine. It was like saying "hello" to Hitler's National-Socialist Party, but they understood they couldn't move forward with the old name, so they changed [it] to Svoboda,** which means "Freedom" in English. They were supported by some groups and the bourgeois government because the Ukrainian government [and] administration of Yanukovich [were] trying to use fascists to fight their political enemies. For example, you know that in Ukraine, one of the most popular politicians was Julia Tymoshenko. She was a really corrupt politician, but at the same time, she was quite popular, so, Yanukovich and his team used Svoboda in order to attack [her]. They made some good financial donations to Svoboda, and within a few years, they [went] from [being] the small fascist party in the West of Ukraine [to becoming] a big parliamentary political party. I should explain that Ukraine is a very nationalistic country. When the Soviet Union crashed and we had a big social disaster here in Ukraine, **it was [the] intention and willingness of people to fight capitalism because it didn't give anything good to people, and [all of the] Ukrainian oligarchy, new businessmen, new rich people began to use nationalistic ideology to prevent the country from returning to the "Red Past". We've had nationalistic propaganda for 20 years through media, in school, and we have good financial support to fascist movements. These two conditions made possible for fascists to be in the Ukrainian parliament.**

HANEUL: Mike, what would you like to ask or add?

MICHAEL: Well, for any of these groups that you guys are working against, **do you think that there are any outside influences, or is it entirely internal within the country?** For example, people accuse the United States intelligence, CIA, etc., or British Intelligence for meddling in other countries affairs, especially groups that aren't in the natives best interests. Do you think that any of that is playing into the groups of Ukraine?

SERGEY: **I should explain from the very beginning that we are not fighting fascists. It's not our main goal. Our main goal is [the] Ukrainian oligarchy and Ukrainian ruling class,** because Ukrainian fascists are only a symptom of this disease called capitalistic development. Actually, they are only one of the problems in Ukraine because we have a huge number of problems connected to corruption, poverty, and far-right movements. This big unemployment, this poverty in Ukraine, they are not creating a good basis of development, [but] of these fascist neo-Nazi movements. So, our main enemy is the ruling class. Of course, we are attacked every time by fascists, but we should understand that they are only some part, some guard of the ruling class. If we are talking

about these paramilitarists that are acting now in Ukraine, I don't have any evidence that the CIA or British Secret Services are cooperating with them, but we know that some of their gangsters were training in Latvia and they had some military bases in the Baltic countries. That means that they [were] prepared by somebody. I don't know by whom, but **we can imagine that the US government was very active in Ukrainian issues because Western diplomats have declared that they had spent five billion dollars [on] the development of democracy in Ukraine, but we don't have any idea of how this money had been spent, or what they paid for, but five billion dollars had been invested for the last 10 years to different political groups. We are really disappointed about this strong Western influence because they are not condemning far-right groups. They are not concerned about growing far-rights. They didn't see any problems with this, so I think that Western countries have a lot of influence in the Ukrainian situation.**

HANEUL: We wanted to mention also there were talks between the Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet and the EU Foreign Affairs Representative Catherine Ashton, and they both declared at one point that Euromaidan had financed the snipers at the time of the ousting of Yanukovich, but we also noticed some of the Euromaidan leaders were actually working with people like John McCain. They had been seen in speeches. Can you tell us, who are some of the main people that are some of the fascist or oligarchic elements that are currently running parliament, and what were their roles in the attacks of the initial protests that lead to Yanukovich fleeing the country?

SERGEY: You would not believe that Right Sector was created by the administration of Yanukovich. They created this part of the protests in order to show fascist participation there, so they took radical fascist groups in order to show that all of the protests were far-right, and they thought that people would be disappointed when they saw all of the fascist elements in Kyiv and Euromaidan, but people were so angry at the administration of Yanukovich that they followed and supported Right Sector, and when Yanukovich ran away from the country, Right Sector became a powerful political force. This is really big problem, and now the leader of Right Sector—his name is [Dmitry] Yarosh—he is trying to be the president of Ukraine, and he will participate in presidential elections. I have no idea how many votes he will get, but nevertheless, participation of far-right leaders is a very, very bad mark for Ukrainian policy. It's like, in Germany, Andy Peewood participating in Presidential and parliament elections.

MICHAEL: I have a question. What is an example of a policy from far-right people that specifically isn't good for the Ukrainian people?

SERGEY: **The main idea of the far-right is a national, corporate state.** They are against trade union and the Russian language. You know that Ukraine is separated into two big divisions. Half of Ukraine speaks Ukrainian and the other half speaks Russian. They are against Russian language. They are against feminism, women's rights. They are very homophobic, so in this [their] internal policy, they are trying to be very traditional, right-oriented politicians.

HANEUL: And you know what's funny about that, I **wanted to mention, is that when you find financial backing by Western powers, they tend to support neoconservative groups like Svoboda and Right Sector,** but also, in other parts of the world, you have al-Nursra in Syria, you have al-Qaeda factions around the world, al-Shabaab in Somalia, and the funny thing about it is, **they always give backing to these ultraconservative**

groups of people. Like, just recently, Barack Obama has decided to rekindle ties with King Abdullah of the Saudi Arabia kingdom.

SERGEY: Yeah, sure. You see that this is big chain. We are not surprised about this Western policy because Ukraine is a big part of a big chain. You know what they're doing in Syria, in Ukraine, in Venezuela, in Thailand; it is the same. They are supporting ultraconservative governments. You can see that all of these governments—Bashar al-Assad, Victor Yanukovich—they are not really progressive. They are not very democratic governments, but they, more or less, they are Western-oriented, they are not anti-imperialists. They are very common politicians that are trying to be in some way useful to their countries. So, you see, Yanukovich was a very pro-Western politician. He was guilty only of his willingness to minimize all of these conditions of free-trade zones with the EU. That was his only problem. He was not a socialist. He was not anti-imperialist. He was dreaming about how he could be in the Western establishment. So, this support of ultraconservative forces is one of the foundations for US foreign policy.

HANEUL: Yeah, it's absurd. It's amazing, and it goes all across the board, all across the world. Now Mike, did you want to ask any questions?

MICHAEL: Yeah, well we've spoken a little about how foreign interests may or may not be influencing politics in Ukraine. Certainly, it's happening to some degree. Now, Ukraine is kind of stuck, physically and politically, between the interests of Russia and NATO. So, who do you think right now is interfering more positively or negatively with Ukraine's internal affairs?

SERGEY: Ah, you see, Ukraine is a country with a very dramatic history, and if you could see history since WWI and WWII, you can see that Ukraine was one of the battlefields in both World Wars. Now, we're on the big battlefield between the Russian and Chinese blocs, and the Western blocs. We are on the frontline, and I don't think that Western influence can have any positive influence on Ukrainian policies. At the same time, the problem with Russia is that it is not a very progressive regime. **Vladimir Putin is quite an interesting politician, but he is not a socialist. He is not really progressive, so people here don't want to be in one bloc or the other. We have supporters of European integration, people that want to be in NATO and the European Union, and we have some people who are very close economically and mentally to Russia, but we also have a third group that are supporting Ukrainian national independence** and our movement is one of those movements who are fighting for Ukrainian independence, that we should not be in any political blocs, but this position is quite hard to be protected, because people understand that we should either be in the EU or in Russia. The other problem is, right now, I'm in the eastern part of Ukraine, and here we have high-tech industrial production.

Right now, we are still able to produce airplanes and space rockets, and we are producing equipment for nuclear stations. It is a very high-tech industry and the only markets that can [preserve] our products are Russia, China, and India, and other Eastern countries. You can imagine that the European Union will never [preserve] our airplanes, space rockets, and our nuclear equipment; they are closing high-tech industries in the Eastern countries they get in. So, people here are really afraid of this Western integration, that we will be in the EU free-trade zone, but what will we supply to EU markets? What can we supply? Ukraine is one of the biggest producers of grain, and is the biggest producer of sunflower oil in the world, but these are raw materials [of lesser value], and [by] integrating into the European Union,

we are losing our high technologies.

HANEUL: One thing I really wanted to note on was the importance, geopolitically, that Ukraine plays into the entire picture. We have one of Barack Obama's top foreign policy advisors, [who] is Zbigniew Brzezinski. One of the things that he said, 20 years ago—he talked about this particular quote: “Russia can be neither an empire nor a democracy, but it cannot be both. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine, suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire.” So, he's talking specifically about one of the two things. The first is the natural gas pipelines that go through Crimea as well as the Southern parts of Ukraine, [and] additionally, that brings NATO to the doorstep of Moscow, which also plays an even stronger geopolitical role, as we know there are also missile defense systems in place in Poland, and they were trying at one point to get them into Ukraine. I'm not sure if they actually went through with that. Can you tell me some of the other geopolitical points for the United States if they were to destabilize Ukraine?

SERGEY: It was one of the dreams of the US administration to create in Ukraine an anti-Russian regime in order to escalate this confrontation with Russia, and Russia is really surrounded from different parts of their borders by US allies. You see Afghanistan is more or less controlled by NATO. Turkey is also a very Western-oriented country and they are controlling the Black Sea, and Russia is very worried about it. Now they are trying to have Ukraine. I think that one of the main reasons for this coup was the close relationship between Ukraine and China, because President Yanukovich, when he was disappointed with these conditions on free trade zones with the EU, he made important steps to make Ukraine closer to China, and China arranged some credit line for Ukraine, and they were ready to invest some money [in] Ukrainian industries and agriculture. I think that one of the reasons for this attack was Ukrainian cooperation with China.

HANEUL: One of the things I wanted to note, Sergey, is that there were talks also, I remember one of our acquaintances Eric Draitser was [saying], about how Turkey recently had a leak, and in it, he was talking about this false-flag event that [Erdogan] wanted to start in Syria. Now, the strategy behind the leak was... one of the things about Erdogan and Turkey was that they were trying to align themselves with the EU, and then they moved back towards the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, because they're actually an observer state [correction: dialogue partner]. So, in order to get rid of that possibility, they were trying to release the leak. Now his major opponent at this point, I think his name is [correction: Fethullah Gulen], he is more closely tied to the CIA, the United States, and pro-Western powers. So you see how they try to create this shift in balance, this shift in policy, when they don't find that the current leader complies with the demands of the Western hegemony. What are your opinions on that?

SERGEY: Yeah, I think that Turkey is a very specific country, and that Turkish policy is showing how it is proceeding inside countries that are willing to develop independence, and at the same time, they are under the strong influence of Western countries. I knew Turkey quite well. I visited this country many times, and I can see how much people there are willing to develop independence. They are very anti-imperialistic and want to have a good future for Turkey. At the same time, they have so-called political allies that are closely integrated into the Western establishment. They are trying to control everything. This political life and biography of Erdogan shows how difficult it is for Turkish politicians to be for the West or East. You see in Ukraine, when Russia took the Crimean peninsula, these are 300,000 Tatar people whom are Muslims. They are quite close to Turkey, because, you

know, Crimea was the territory of the Ottoman Empire and Tatars are quite friendly to Turkish people, and I think that one of the main problems for Vladimir Putin will be to minimize Turkish influence in the Tatar minorities in Crimean, because it is quite a dangerous issue. They (Turkey) have 15 percent Tatar people, and this also quite interesting issue for your investigations.

HANEUL: Wow, yeah, this is going to play into a very sensitive geopolitical game in the near future. We'll see what happens. Many of them voted for secession into the Commonwealth of Independent States, or the Russian Federation. Only time will tell what happens as they begin to go back into the Russian system.

MICHAEL: Sure, as we were talking, I was pulling up a couple of headlines here. This one is from Infowars.com, and it says "Ukrainian Junta Concedes to IMF Looting Plan". This gets back into the West and East fighting for influence, and this is the economic angle. It's obviously very shaded with the West, NATO and the World Bank, and this article is saying that the government of Arseniy Yatsenyuk, a former central banker, is conceding to IMF demands for austerity. Would you agree with that statement?

SERGEY: Yeah, sure. **The IMF plan is killing Ukraine**, and the funniest thing was that the Ukrainian government [and] the Ukrainian politicians who are on the administration right now were criticizing Yanukovich for his anti-people, anti-social policies. They were criticizing pension and medical reform, but now, when they are in the government, they are proceeding with these reforms, and they are promoting social cuts and austerity measures. They are promoting the IMF plan to kill the Ukrainian social sphere. So, the role of the IMF here is really dramatic.

HANEUL: Yeah, that's going to be very huge, especially now that they're passing that in Parliament. Once you privatize everything, it's going to create chaos and it's not going to make things any better. It's this constant cycle of conflict that they create in these countries, for instance, when they wanted to fight Siad Barre in Somalia, and the country collapsed, and there were warlord factions. The same with Libya—a [relatively] stable country. After the [correction: killing] of Muammar Gaddafi, basically all of the elements within start to fight with each other. It's going to disrupt what people naturally want. They never seem to do things that work within the interests of the people, working with these IMF bailout packages [and] if they don't see what's happening in Spain, Greece, Italy, what's happening with Cypress as well, with Ireland... these austerity packages don't do anything. They don't produce any growth. They don't help them to innovate. They don't help to put plans back into the social sphere.

HANEUL: The last question that I'd like to ask you is this. There is a group of people on both sides of the Ukrainian border. We have the Russian troops to the right and in Crimea. We have the Ukrainian troops on the left, and I see some kinds of provocations that are taking place with snipers. One Ukrainian soldier was killed and another injured, and this is bringing tensions of the Cold War to all-time highs. So, what do you think about the possibility of a full-scale war or invasion taking place, and what do you hope we can prevent, or how can we stop this situation?

SERGEY: I hope that war between Russia and Ukraine is impossible because they're two big industrial countries, and on the east of Ukraine, they could be occupied or taken by Russia. There are so many industrial plants and there could be a great chemical catastrophe if this war is started. So, I think that we will have this great tension between these countries

for many years. It will be very similar to the India and Pakistan conflict, and all of this military hysteria. You see, some people in the Russian establishment—they are interested in these tensions because they want to have some [military] contracts, and this is good business for many people. At the same time with Ukraine, this tension and possibility of war with Russia is a good reason to explain why we are so poor, why we cannot go forward and develop our economy, and to do anything with the social issues, to develop the social sphere. So, Ukrainian and Russian governments are interested in these tensions in order to talk about external problems and are keeping silent about internal problems. It's really a pity.

HANEUL: It's a [pitiful] situation. I've met a lot of Ukrainians while living in Shanghai. I've met them in Seoul. They're a good people, along with the Russians as well. The funny thing is, people pretty much want the same thing in life. They want to be happy. They want to be free. They want to be secure.

SERGEY: Yeah, right. Sure, and right now, here in Ukraine, we are starting to mobilize against this dictatorship and work for peace, democracy, and solidarity between different peoples, and we are sure we will be successful, because nobody in Ukraine wants to be involved in this war.

HANEUL: Yeah, it's very true, and as a spokesman for Borotba, can you tell us what you and your organization would like people to do in order to become involved or in order to show support?

SERGEY: Yeah, we are calling people in Ukraine and all over the world to support our efforts to escape this bloody war with Russia, and we are calling people for organization, high consciousness, and discipline, and this is our [collective] action; that is our only weapon, our ideas are our only weapon that we can [use to] fight with this military hysteria and, of course, people in Ukraine are hoping for international solidarity to stop this political and military crisis.

HANEUL: Wonderful, wonderful, and we hope so, too. We hope that everything will be okay in the end. Mike, do you have any final comments?

MIKE: I do have one question from my original list. From both sides, the West and the East, is a false-flag attack going to be at play? And, of course, a false flag attack is when somebody stages an attack on their own people or their own forces, in order to create an incentive for more fighting. Between everything that's going on in terms of violence and fighting on the ground in Ukraine, do you think that either side, or Ukraine itself, could use such a tactic?

SERGEY: Um, I don't know, because there are such things that, yesterday, some things are not possible in Ukrainian policy, but now, everything is possible. So, we cannot be sure about anything. Anything could happen here, so, unfortunately, the situation right now is very, very unstable and everything is possible.

HANEUL: In addition, what I had mentioned to people before, with the Orange Revolution of 2004 and with this current uprising taking place in Ukraine, **there was CANVAS operating—that was the Center for [Applied] NonViolent Action [and Strategies], and they were basically stoking the fires.** One of my associates was talking about how, during this time, they were handing out food and water, and trying to get support. **You had**

people like John McCain, and people from the National Endowment for Democracy, the International Republican Institute, that were also operating in Ukraine, and that was basically a failed coup in 2004, but this one, they seem to be pushing their agenda once again. So, that's one of the things I would like to see out of the picture so that Ukrainians can get back into healing the country and also, getting involved with one another. Not on this hateful bent that a lot of these far-rights are trying to provoke.

Audio at
<http://www.mixcloud.com/thelastdefense/e0024-e24-red-star-vs-brown-shirt-with-sergey-kirichuk/>

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