

Ukrainian Neo-Nazi Regime Bans Russian Orthodox Church

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*After years of illegal persecution, Ukrainian **President Volodymyr Zelensky** called on Kiev lawmakers to draft a law banning the Russian Orthodox Church from Ukrainian territory. The justification would be the "necessity" to ban institutions linked to Russia due to the current conflict. With this, once again the Ukrainian government shows that it does not prioritize popular interests, considering that Orthodoxy is the majority religion of the Ukrainian people.*

The new Ukrainian measure comes amid the recent initiative to extinguish all Russian organizations active on Ukrainian territory. Previously, companies and associations linked to Russian citizens had already been outlawed. Now, the focus is on attacking religious institutions. In addition to calling on lawmakers to approve a law to prohibit the Moscow Patriarchate's activities in Ukraine, Zelensky also signed a Decree ordering the Security Council to impose personal sanctions against representatives of Russian religious groups, which will target all the clergy of the Orthodox Church.

In his statement on the matter, Zelensky said that Kiev cannot allow Russia to "build an empire" and "weaken Ukraine from within", nor to "manipulate" Ukrainian citizens in favor of the so-called "Russian aggression". In other words, Zelensky asserts that he wants to end Russian-Ukrainian ties and prevent the continuity of cultural and religious heritage between the two countries.

Zelensky's argument is absolutely fallacious. In fact, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is part of the Moscow Patriarchate, but this is a consequence of the historical formation of that region. Ukraine, Belarus and Russia were for centuries a single empire, not different states, with the fragmentation of the region being a post-Soviet political phenomenon. The distribution of the canonical territories of the Church does not necessarily follow the laws of the legal borders of the National States, since the borders are constantly changed as a result of political events, while in the Church the changes are not so frequent.

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has always had broad administrative autonomy, and there has never been any kind of political imposition by the Moscow Patriarchate on the local faithful. There is no data to corroborate Zelensky's claim that Russia is building an empire to "weaken Ukraine from within", this rhetoric being just an attempt to disguise the indisputable fact that the Kiev regime is promoting religious persecution against the majority faith of its own people.

However, this is not really surprising. Since 2014, the Orthodox Church has been persecuted in Ukraine. The genocide in Donbass included since its beginning the massacre of Orthodox Christians linked to Russian traditions, as well as the bombing of churches, monasteries, and the assassination of clergymen in the Eastern oblasts. The situation worsened in 2019, when, after an anti-canonical maneuver financed by NATO, a Ukrainian ultranationalist schism that had been formed in the 1990s came to be "recognized" by the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and then the Kiev regime began a wave of support for this sect, considering it a kind of "Ukrainian national church" to the detriment of the real Orthodox Church - which is linked to Moscow.

Since then, the Ukrainian state has carried out various crimes against Orthodoxy, including using police force to illegally confiscate properties of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine and give them to the schismatic nationalists. It is important to mention that the nationalist ideology of this schism is so strong that in religious rituals it is even common to venerate Ukrainian national leaders as Christian saints, including the Nazi agent **Stepan Bandera** - which is why this "church" receives wide support from the neo-Nazi regime and the West.

In this sense, what is happening now is not something actually "new", but the formalization and officialization of a persecutory practice that was already becoming common in the recent years. At first, the Church was persecuted mainly in Donbass, illegally. Now, the State will be able to carry out operations against Orthodoxy throughout the entire national territory - and in full accordance with the legislation of the neo-Nazi government.

This is just one more step in the project of anti-Russian cultural genocide. After banning literature, music and language, now they ban religion. In fact, Ukraine's de-russification campaign can only be stopped with the success of Moscow's special military operation. Kiev is determined to serve the Western interest in removing any ties between Russia and Ukraine, even if this is not in the benefit of the local people, considering that even among ethnic Ukrainians the Orthodox Church is the majority religion. Kiev's plan is to replace the legitimate, traditional Orthodox Church followed by the majority with the Western-backed ultranationalist schismatic sect.

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