

Ukrainian News Service Says Standard of Living Is Plummeting

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The plunging economy of Ukraine has evidently become so bad that Ukrainians now can even feel safe to call publicly for stopping the war against the separatist Donbass region of the country, and for reallocating those military expenditures so that Ukrainians in the non-rebelling part of the country won't starve to death.

On July 23rd, Dmitriy Gordon, a leading Ukrainian journalist, is thus, for the first time, publicly urging that the separatist region, Donbass (consisting of the Donetsk and Luhansk districts), be officially acknowledged to be no longer part of Ukraine. [He says](#) that "It is better to dissociate Ukraine from the occupied territories of Donbass, to spend that money on housing and financial aid for immigrants [refugees from Donbass] than to keep the people [the vast majority of residents in Donbass] who hate Ukraine [though they actually didn't hate Ukraine until Ukraine's government was [violently overthrown in February 2014](#) and the new government [bombed them for not accepting that new government](#)]. ... I will tell an unfashionable view. Many people think it, but not everyone will dare to say it out loud. Ukraine does not need Donbass. It shackles the country. ... It is like a lizard that lays aside its tail. ... We need to get away from Donbass, and move into Europe without this tail."

The choice between guns and butter becomes easier when there is no butter. And the butter in Ukraine is now gone. So, butter is what Ukrainians increasingly want. Thus, for example, RIA Novosti Ukraine news agency headlined on July 19th, "[Ukraine Today: Poverty, Absolute Poverty, and Retirees Dream of Death,](#)" and reported that, "Two years ago, the average salary of Ukrainians in dollar terms amounted to 275 American money. Now it's less than 100 dollars."

This RIAN report says that, "Neither the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, nor Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, nor Speaker of Rada [Parliament] Volodymyr Groisman — none of them — expresses public concern about the lowered living standards; no one has called to review them, much less to improve these economic conditions."

It goes on to say, "Expert of the Public Safety Fund Yuri Havrylchenko believes that the current level of income of the majority of the Ukrainian population is poverty, and retirees are in a state of slow death from starvation. ... [He says,] 'In Ukraine, all workers live in poverty. The level of their income and consumption is less than 17 dollars a day. With a few exceptions, almost all pensioners live below the absolute poverty line, consumption is less than \$5 a day. This means that they are dying of hunger, only slowly. If they do not even have enough to eat, then what can we say about the cost of everything else?'"

Mr. Gordon, for his part, might be attacked for urging separation, if he were blaming Ukraine

for the civil war; so, he instead blames the residents of Donbass ([the direct victims of the coup-installed government](#)), as the cause of Ukrainians' misery. He says: "For the most part residents of the region adhere to pro-Russian views. They hate Ukrainians, don't want to speak Ukrainian, and they reject Ukrainian and European values."

He adds, "Criminal psychology is inherent in so many people there ... It is no accident Yanukovich was elected so much at the mercy of bandits in the Donetsk region." Yanukovich had won [more than 90% of the votes that were cast in Donbass](#).

Yanukovich had turned down the offer from the European Union because the economists at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences had calculated that the EU's offer [would cost Ukraine \\$160 billion](#).

*Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).*

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