

US Training Nazis, Western Media Providing Cover

By [Eric Draitser](#)

Global Research, April 22, 2015

[New Eastern Outlook](#)

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

It has become a popular position both in the mainstream and pseudo-alternative media, and among those on the Russophobic left, to downplay the significant fascist influence on the political and military institutions, as well as the cultural character of the “New Ukraine.” Quite often, the reality of Ukrainian fascism is obscured by vague assertions that such conclusions are merely “Russian propaganda,” that they are simply Kremlin talking points, and not statements of objective reality.

Indeed, influential political figures such as the ever-hilarious John McCain and Jen Psaki, and global media brands like The Guardian and FOX, have all rushed to the nearest camera or twitter account to proclaim that Ukraine is “free” and that we should “stand united” with it. Carefully embedded in these pleas is the notion that Ukraine is democratic, and that whatever “ultra-nationalists” – coded language for fascists and Nazis – exist, are merely a marginal influence at best.

Such vacuous statements belie the inescapable fact that Nazis make up an important strata of both the political and military establishment. Moreover, they are intended to provide cover for US policy which provides these elements with the support they need to both influence the political development of the country, and prosecute its illegal war against the people of Donetsk and Lugansk.

At issue is not whether everyone in Ukraine is a Nazi, as that is an absurd argument that no one is really making. Rather, the question has to do with precisely *which* individuals and factions that *are* unmistakably fascist are being supported, directly or indirectly, by the US and its allies. More to the point, which of the US-backed Nazi elements are integral to the continued illegal war against the East, and which figure prominently in the future trajectory of the Ukrainian state.

Arming Nazis to Fight for “Democracy”

The war in Ukraine is being prosecuted by the US-backed government in Kiev using all available means. While of course the regular Ukrainian military forces (also armed and trained by the US) are fighting this war, alongside them, and in concert with them, are outright Nazi elements who, like their regular army brethren, are receiving direct support from Washington.

The [Associated Press](#) reported on March 31, 2015 that “The United States plans to send soldiers to Ukraine in April for training exercises with units of the country’s national guard... the units to be trained include the Azov Battalion, a volunteer force that has attracted criticism for its far-right sentiments including brandishing an emblem widely used in Nazi Germany.” Of course, first and

foremost is the fact that US military will be on the ground in Ukraine providing direct support for the Ukrainian military. Isn't that precisely what Washington accuses Russia of doing (while failing to provide evidence), namely providing direct military support on the ground?

But leaving aside such pesky questions as to hypocrisy and accountability, there is still an even more salient point. The language employed in the Associated Press article essentially whitewashes the true nature of the Azov Battalion: who they are and what they stand for. AP refers to criticism of the Azov Battalion for its "far-right sentiments including brandishing an emblem widely used in Nazi Germany." Unpack that deliberately, deceptively circumspect language, and it becomes clear that there is a fear, if not outright refusal, to call Azov Battalion what they are: Nazis.

It is not "far right sentiments" that Azov holds. Far right sentiments might be American libertarian supporters of Ron Paul, or even supporters of Marine Le Pen in France. Azov Battalion instead has *fascist* sentiments that include advocating for ethnic cleansing to "purify" Ukraine. They talk of "one nation for one people" and other such Nazi slogans. But don't take my word for it.

As [Foreign Policy](#) magazine - not exactly a "pro-Russian" source - quoted Azov Battalion literature in 2014:

Unfortunately, among the Ukrainian people today there are a lot of 'Russians' (by their mentality, not their blood), 'kikes,' 'Americans,' 'Europeans' (of the democratic-liberal European Union), 'Arabs,' 'Chinese' and so forth, but there is not much specifically Ukrainian... The reason for this situation is the mass propaganda of trans-myths that are foreign to us through advertising, television, laws and education. It's unclear how much time and effort will be needed to eradicate these dangerous viruses from our people.

This conception of the nation as rotten and impure because of perceived "degenerate" elements is a hallmark of all fascist organizations, from the Ku Klux Klan in the US to Hitler's Nazi Party. These are most certainly not, as the AP referred to them, "far right sentiments." Such views are not even "nationalistic" in the broadest sense of the word. They are deeply racist and fundamentally rooted in bigotry.

As an Azov Battalion fighter explained to [The Guardian](#), "I have nothing against Russian nationalists, or a great Russia...But Putin's not even a Russian. Putin's a Jew." Aside from the obvious falsehood of that statement, it is quite revealing in the sense that it illustrates unmistakably the true nature of many, if not all, Azov's members' views; to be fair, they are also deeply anti-Russian, despite what this particular fighter had to say.

Returning to the AP article, the inexplicable use of the phrase "brandishing an emblem widely used in Nazi Germany" is deeply troubling. An honest description would simply be "brandishing Nazi emblems," a clear statement that would get the point across. Instead, the reader is left with the notion that somehow Azov uses an emblem - in this case the [Wolfsangel](#) - that just happened to be used during the Nazi regime, rather than a symbol deeply embedded in the collective memory of Nazism in the region.

This goes hand in hand with the utterly absurd obfuscations of Azov members themselves who claim that their swastikas and other symbols are just indicators of their "interest in

Nordic mythology.” Or, as one of the Azov members told The Guardian, “The swastika has nothing to do with the Nazis, it was an ancient sun symbol.” While there may be some who are either shockingly ignorant, or simply feign stupidity to mask their fascist ideology, the leadership in Ukraine that relies on Azov and other such groups knows perfectly well who they are and what they believe.

But of course, the mainstream and pseudo-alternative media, along with the liberal and conservative Russophobes, quite often try to deflect the logical conclusions of clear-thinking people who see the fascists for what they are. They argue that Azov Battalion and Right Sector are just “marginal” groups that are held up by “Russian propaganda” to smear Ukraine’s government and military. But this is far from the truth.

Even The Guardian, a publication I have [personally critiqued](#) for their anti-Russian lies regarding Ukraine, has confirmed that these are not isolated examples, noting that the Azov Battalion is “one of many volunteer brigades,” and that “Azov and other battalions could be integrated into the army or special forces when the conflict is over.”

Ukraine’s Fascist Future

That Azov Battalion, Right Sector, and other fascist formations do not comprise all of Ukraine is clear. But what is equally clear is that such groups wield tremendous power and influence both through their ability to marshal weapons and use brute force, and for their deep connections to the political and financial oligarch establishment controlling the country.

The Nazi-deniers are fond of saying that, despite the fact that a number of key fascist leaders were elected to Ukraine’s parliament, they represent a tiny segment of the political establishment. Dmitry Yarosh, the founder of the fascist Right Sector organization, has been serving as an MP in Ukraine’s parliament where he has directly, and repeatedly, [threatened](#) Ukraine’s oligarch President Poroshenko with a violent overthrow of the government. As recently as late March 2015, Yarosh was [quoted](#) as saying that:

Of course, the next [Maidan] will be, let’s say, different. People are so heavily armed now that no one is going to sit in tents and wait for a month or two, singing songs or waving flashlights...Our position is that we must walk on a knife’s edge. On the one hand we must maintain the state, but on the other, we must make it so that parasites do not drink the blood of the Ukrainian people, as they did before the revolution.

Naturally, in the so called “New Ukraine” such inflammatory language coming from an infamous Nazi criminal is no mere rhetoric, but rather must be understood as a direct threat. However, rather than purging such individuals from the government and putting them on trial, Yarosh is [offered a position in the Ministry of Defense](#).

Other fascist political formations are also prominent, including the well represented Radical Party of Oleh Lyashko, a violent criminal with a history of kidnapping and torture documented even by the pro-Western NGO [Amnesty International](#). The notorious Svoboda Party of Oleh Tyahnybok is also a major player. Though Svoboda’s direct political representation in the parliament is low, its influence is substantial as former members have infested a number of other political parties.

The precarious state of the government in Kiev which tenuously maintains its grip on power is worrying to many around the world – especially in Russia – who rightly fear the possibility of a full-blown fascist takeover from the likes of Yarosh, Lyashko, and oligarchs such as Ihor Kolomoisky, who have paid the salaries of various fascist groups in order to use them as de facto private armies. And it is within this bubbling cauldron of hate and political uncertainty that the United States has chosen to arm and train fighters for a continued proxy war against Russia.

But of course, one cannot blame imperialist “strategic planners” in Washington for pursuing such a dangerous policy...after all, it’s what they do.

One can blame, however, a compliant corporate-controlled western media which has abdicated all responsibility to truth in its reporting on Ukraine. The Associated Press article mentioned above is a very minor example of the sort of propaganda that has passed for journalism on Ukraine since the coup against Yanukovich in February 2014. The New York Times and the Washington Post, FOX News and MSNBC, all are equally accountable.

But the lies are only part of the story. It is when those lies cost innocent lives that we must stand up and demand an end to the madness. In Ukraine, sadly, it seems that US policy and media propaganda work hand-in-glove to inflame the situation in a country already on fire.

Eric Draitser is an independent geopolitical analyst based in New York City, he is the founder of StopImperialism.org and OP-ed columnist for RT, exclusively for the online magazine [“New Eastern Outlook”](#).

The original source of this article is [New Eastern Outlook](#)
Copyright © [Eric Draitser](#), [New Eastern Outlook](#), 2015

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Eric Draitser](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca