

Clarifying the Position, Part III: Russian "Official" Communists on the Russia-Ukraine Crisis



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RUSSIAN "OFFICIAL"
COMMUNISTS ON THE
RUSSIA-UKRAINE CRISIS

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Previously, we have published materials on the positions of the Communists in Britain and the United States. Now, it's time to review the positions of the Russian communists, which are especially important since Russia is a main participant in ongoing events.

The escalation of the Ukraine crisis was received with a mixed reaction in the Russian left: from complete support to complete rejection. Some rushed into battle against the "special operation" - actions, rallies, pickets. Others maintain their silence and false neutrality. A third group jumped to defend it, hiding their justifications behind largely erroneous, and far-fetched pretexts.

In this material, we will focus on those organisations that have come out in defense of the Russian government. Unfortunately, they are in the majority. Since so many of the positions are so similar, we won't try to list them all, and so we will limit ourselves to the most noticeable and revealing cases.

CPRF

The "Communist Party of the Russian Federation" is formally the largest communist organisation in the country. The CPRF is represented both in regional parliaments and in the Russian State Duma, the national legislature, where it has the second largest faction behind the ruling party.

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Russian communists can name many times when the CPRF showed itself as an organisation that does not have the right to be called communist. This includes the entry of its representatives into bourgeois government at the end of the 90s, and financing their party from the state budget (its actual transformation into one of the institutions of the bourgeois political system), their practically open sale of parliament seats, and having capitalists, open nationalists and chauvinists fill ranks in the party.

Naturally, all these activities are supported by an appropriate theoretical platform. The leader of the party - Gennady Zyuganov - from the end of the 90s defended and planted in the party the idea of "state patriotism". Over the past two decades, this party has pursued a consistent opportunist policy, acting as the "left wing of the patriotic forces." To explain this situation, we will have to make a short trip into history.

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The counter-revolution in the USSR and the defeat of the forces of socialism led to the fact that in the 1990s the broad masses of the former Soviet Union faced a social catastrophe. Within a few years, the vast industry of the country of socialism was expropriated by the new capitalists. Many enterprises under various pretexts (usually far-fetched) were closed by new owners, and production at the remaining enterprises was suspended or reduced. Millions of jobs, housing, recreational, educational and other broad social benefits - everything that the socialist state and its industry provided - were lost by the workers, which led to a massive increase in unemployment and drop in living standards.

There are several features of the situation in Russia in that period:

- the open dictatorship of capital, established in the former socialist country;
- the scale and speed of the counter-revolution and counter-revolutionary transformations that took place over 5-6 years (the turn of the 80-90s);
- the openly pro-Western position of the ruling bourgeoisie grouping at that time, which in fact handed over to Western capitalists many of the advantages gained by the USSR both on the world stage and in internal affairs;
- the dominance of bourgeois propaganda;
- the absence in the country of a united communist organisation with a modern Marxist-Leninist theory.

The broad masses of the population could not understand how they lost their power and were defeated in the fight against capitalism, how the country's leadership moved from Gorbachev's ideas about "perestroika" and "renewal of socialism" to the destruction of socialism and the Soviet Union – the state who defended socialism in open combat with Nazism during the greatest war in the history of humankind.

The victory of the capitalists in the Cold War, the ardent desire of the ruling group led by Boris Yeltsin – the man who earned fame from "Perestroika" and used it to come to power and implement counter-revolutionary changes – to integrate into the system of capitalism and the approval of its policies by the United States – the former the main enemy of the USSR – suggested betrayal. It seemed that such a powerful country as the Soviet Union, which was able to defeat fascism, simply could not disintegrate under the influence of internal processes, that this happened primarily due to Western imperialism, "external enemies" who "bribed" the leadership.

Such views found good ground both among those who were still trying to save or restore the USSR, and among bourgeois "patriots" – conservatives, nationalists, monarchists. From this camp, many also condemned the collapse of the Soviet Union, but from the point of view that under Soviet rule, Russia was a great and strong state and was feared, and under pro-Western capitalists, it became a dependent state. These views coexisted with a fierce hatred of the communists, "who destroyed the country in 1917 and 1991".

The liberal economic reforms of the new leadership, aimed at creating a market economy and a sharp decline in the role of the now-capitalist state, provoked protests from various segments of the population, who defended the need to maintain state ownership of enterprises where many generations of Soviet citizens had worked, to prevent their privatisation and dissolution. But since the USSR no longer existed, it was about the capitalist Russian Federation, about a "strong hand", which corresponded to the aspirations, above all, of bourgeois patriots.

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Many were not against the destruction of the USSR and were not against the establishment of capitalism. They only believed that the establishment of capitalism went "wrong", and that because of this error "Russia was weakened". The idea of "correct privatisation" (ie, a milder version of the robbery of workers) and the creation of "correct capitalism" remained popular during the 90s. Only a grouping of "good", "patriotic" capitalists in power could accomplish this.

The appeal to desecrated national pride, the play on the spontaneous desire of the masses to return "as it once was", because it was really better before (in the USSR), an absolute misunderstanding of the reasons for the collapse of socialism and the

choice of a lesser evil – in this background, the CPRF emerged. The organisation was founded in 1993. The very creation of this organisation raises questions, since the previously created Communist Party of the RSFSR was banned by the counter-revolutionary government back in 1991. The fact that the creation of the Communist Party took place without such incidents suggested the cooperation of the party leadership with the government. However, regardless of whether that is truth or fiction, the further activities of the CPRF proceeded in a spirit favourable to the capitalists.

From the very beginning, the CPRF was a parliamentary type of party. In the 1996 presidential elections, the party staked its hopes on the widest possible unification for the platform of “patriotism” and “national independence” in order to elect its leader Gennady Zyuganov to the office. It was then that he formulated the concept of “state patriotism”, according to which the communists of Russia had to abandon the idea of a socialist revolution (since this meant social upheavals, and Russia does not need even more upheavals), to unite “patriotic-minded forces” around themselves (including capitalists) in order to repulse “the insidious West and its accomplices”, and carry out social reforms within the framework of the bourgeois state. “Interaction between the Communist Party and the (Orthodox) Church serves the good and the interests of our country, Russians, all Russian peoples,” says, for example, the party leader even today.

Under the 1993 constitution, the position of the presidency received huge benefits, so it seemed that something could change with the election of a communist president. The elections ended with Zyuganov’s defeat in the second round and Yeltsin’s re-election. Bourgeois propaganda slandered the communists with all its fury and frightened the townsfolk with the return of “Stalinism”, Gulags and deficit. However, the Communists would hardly have been allowed to win anyway. History has given us many examples proving that capitalism cannot be balloted down.

For almost the entire time of its existence, the party expressed “critical support” for the existing government in the field of international relations and maintained the malaise in the communist movement. Instead of an objective analysis of the Soviet experience – indulgence in the spontaneous moods of nostalgia, lack of theoretical training; instead of modern agitation – outdated forms and an appeal to the “restoration of the USSR” and the “damned West”; instead of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism – grovelling before the government, conciliation and opportunism, turning the party into an appendage of bourgeois politics.

Now, all this has been confirmed. In connection with recent events, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation appeared as an unofficial mouthpiece of Kremlin propaganda. Party “theorists”, officials, media people repeat everything from the first persons of the state (President Putin, presidential press secretary Peskov, Foreign Minister Lavrov, etc.) and their court propagandists without critical reflection, without analysis, even without comment. Literally everything: from “fascist power in Ukraine” – without a clear explanation of the fascist nature of the Ukrainian state – to the forced nature of the “special operation” for the sake of supposedly peace and “protection of national security”.

CPRF abandoned any Marxist rhetoric. There will be no class analysis, no attempts to examine the true causes of the conflict from every angle, the reasons for this special military operation, the real interests, goals and objectives pursued by Putin in this adventure. There only remains vomited-up Kremlin propaganda:

After the appeal of the leadership of the DPR and LPR, the Russian authorities launched a military-political operation aimed at forcing Nazi provocateurs to peace. The steps taken are aimed at guaranteeing peace in Donbas and securing Russia from increasingly acute threats from the United States and NATO....we understand the decision made by the top leadership of our country. It is primarily aimed at

ensuring security and establishing peace in the long-suffering Ukrainian land and, above all, in the Donbass. The goals of the US authorities and their NATO satellites to enslave Ukraine should not be realised. These aggressive plans pose critical threats to Russia's security. In the situation when the Russian Federation has taken a stand in defence of the people of Donbass... Coercing Kiev provocateurs into peace and restraining NATO aggressiveness has become the bidding of the time. Only demilitarisation and denazification of Ukraine can ensure lasting security for the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and the whole of Europe.

This party not only has departed from the Marxist-Leninist theory, it can't even try to disguise its position with Marxist phraseology, openly speaking as an apologist for bourgeois propaganda. In the eyes of these "communists", ongoing events are just a struggle between the evil West and good Russia. The struggle isn't for selfish interests of a political and economic nature, but a struggle for some abstract "security".

First and foremost, any conflicts in a bourgeois imperialist society are fought for the interests of capital (corporations, high officials, businessmen). And in this case, Russian capitalism solves several goals: this is the provision of interests within the country (maintaining the rating of trust), and in the external arena (control over the region, imperialist expansion). The CPRF doesn't tell people the truth, but supports the illusions of government propaganda.

It goes so far that Zyuganov in his speeches sometimes identifies bourgeois Russia and its ruling circles (oligarchs, high-ranking officials, corporations) with the working people: openly denying the opposition of labour and capital.

The CPRF actively condemns US imperialism and its military operations, but in every conceivable way justifies the "special military operations" of Russian imperialism. This applies to both the current military operation and all previous actions. Moreover - according to this "main communist party", "... the main mission of Russia is to bring peace to the whole world."

Here it is - a worthy example of the class approach of pseudo-communists. Of course, the main mission of capitalist (imperialist) Russia, where everything is run by large corporations and snickering officials, is to bring peace to the world. This is what the defenders of imperialism always say: the supporters of "American imperialism" had told you this, the defenders of German imperialism (before Hitler and during the Nazi regime) said this.

No one will tell you that the real mission is destruction and war; no one will say that the goal is to make money for oligarch so-and-so and provide this or that company with new markets for raw materials, labour, or sales so that its owners can make higher profits and buy themselves a bigger yacht.

The declared goals are always something righteous and noble, so that the suffering peoples will support them and won't become resentful. This is how the First World War was justified by both sides. Even the aggressor parties - Germany, Austria-Hungary - they justified their actions with defensive rhetoric: protecting national security, preventing a threat of independence, and so on.

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Separately, it's worth mentioning the practical side of the matter. The CPRF did not just support the recognition of the LPR-DPR and the conduct of a special operation ideologically. The party voted for this in parliament, justifying it with the desire for independence. At this moment the heads of the LPR and DPR are members of "United Russia", Putin's ruling party, since the end of 2021, and in the drive for joining the Russian Federation there can no longer be any truth in their talk of independence.

Worst of all, CPRF supported the strengthening of censorship! Voting for amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, known as the “law on fakes”, amendments which legally prohibit politicians, parties and the media from talking about events in Ukraine in a way that isn’t beneficial for the Kremlin. The events in Ukraine cannot be spoken of as a war, the fascist nature of the “Zelensky regime” cannot be called into question, anti-war events cannot be held, publicly opposed to a military operation, etc., And so-called Russian “communists” supported it... Here is what one of the members of the CPRF and the deputy faction said:

In the bill, there is responsibility not only for false information, but also for reliable information, if it discredits the army. This is scarier. Discrediting implies some humiliation of the position of the armed forces. The same information can be presented in different ways. This is, of course, largely arbitrary. It is hoped that these articles will mainly be aimed at preventing the humiliation of the army...

That is, “communists” should worry about the prestige of the bourgeois army. If such communists (and in fact renegades of socialism and traitors to the working class) are faced with the task of protecting the current social system, then they really must protect, among other things, the prestige of the main state organisations (army, police, bureaucratic services).

According to such a communist, it is impossible to disseminate reliable information of a certain kind: the people should not be told the truth if this truth is inconvenient for the ruling elites. If something bad happens in the bourgeois army, if the bourgeois army itself does something bad, then the people should not know about it. The communist official proposes to deceive the working people, to help the bourgeoisie in its own deceptions. Isn’t this a strange position for an oppositionist, let alone a communist?

No less remarkable is the childish naiveness with which these amendments are justified. “There is hope that it will be aimed at prevention,” etc. No, this measure will not be aimed at some kind of prevention from some kind of humiliation, but instead further controlling the media space and shutting up the mouths of those who disagree, in order to cover the “special operation” in a way that is beneficial to the ruling clique.

The whole current situation clearly shows that the CPRF is not a communist or even an opposition party. This is a guardian party that works to save capitalism in the name of capital from within the opposition. We recommend our readers to familiarise themselves with the correct, in our opinion, criticism of the position of the CPRF by KKE (Communist Party of Greece).

RCWP

The “Russian Communist Workers’ Party” is another organisation built on the ruins of the CPSU in 1992. Throughout its existence, it has positioned itself as a “real Communist Party”, as opposed to the fake oppositionist CPRF. In reality, however, it’s stuck in the same kind of swamp: poor theoretical training, opportunist, revisionist and social-chauvinist sentiments in the organisation, and profanation of communist work. With some popularity at the turn of the century, the RCWP has slowly faded over the past two decades. After the registration of the party was annulled by the Russian state, the RCWP, together with a number of conditionally leftist groups (including Trotskyists), created its own frontal organisation – ROT-Front (an abbreviation for “Russian United Labour Front”), gradually dissolving into this amorphous leftist structure.

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Neither the size of the organisation, nor the scale of its work, nor the quality of this work make it possible to call it a “communist party”.

In the context of this material, it’s worth noting that back in the mid-2010s, various people (including ordinary members of the RCWP and part of its leadership) pointed to the presence of a serious nationalist bias in the organisation. The position of the RCWP on the events of 2014 and the phenomenon of “people’s republics” in Donbass confirmed the correctness of these accusations. The party acted as a promoter of social chauvinism and supported Russian imperialism by organising numerous “trips” and assistance to puppet governments.

All this time, the RCWP continued to contact such an organisation as the CP of Greece and took part in the events of Solidnet. The KKE received congratulations wishes from this party and published its materials. The RCWP organised a conference dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the October Revolution in St. Petersburg. Until now, there has been no criticism of the existing situation in the party by foreign communists, which played into the hands of the opportunist leadership and supported the false image of the RCWP as a “real communist party” in Russia.

Of course, such an organisation could not maintain a stable existence for a long time. Back in the 2010s, groups that disagreed with its course broke away from the party. The events of February 24, 2022 clearly showed the essence of this organisation. Actively using government propaganda clichés, the RCWP took a half-hearted position, making a statement “There is a just beginning in this war”, formally condemning imperialism, but in fact supporting it in this instance.

Thus, the RCWP notes:

We have no doubts that the true aims of the Russian state in this war are quite imperialistic – to strengthen the position of imperialist Russia in world market competition. But, since this struggle today to some extent helps the people of Donbass to repulse Bandera fascism, the communists in this part of it do not deny, but allow and support as much as it is waged against fascism in the Donbass and Ukraine. And they categorically oppose the actions of their government, when, under the cover of the fight against fascism, the aims of expansion and strengthening of Russian imperialism and its allies will be fulfilled ... the possibility is not ruled out ... when, under the pretext of helping Donbass, the Russian authorities begin to resolve their issues, and the troops will simply begin to occupy other regions of Ukraine. We will regard this as a war of conquest, imperialism, and we will not support either one or the other imperialist.

With hysterical publications about “Ukrainian fascism” with which Russian imperialism is allegedly fighting, is also broadcast by the party in its other publications. Since fascism in the Marxist-Leninist ideology is the most reactionary form of the dictatorship of capital, a logical conclusion follows from this: Russian imperialism is more progressive than Ukrainian fascism. It is curious that the RCWP didn’t swing at criticism from just someone, but of the Communist Party of Greece itself.

This conflict aroused a discussion and an exchange of materials between the KKE and the RCWP. We find this problem worthy of a separate material, so we will not give a detailed description of it. It should be noted that the RCWP issued a “critical commentary” (in fact, a condemnation) of the position of the KKE. Commenting on and criticising the statement of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece, the RCWP writes:

Donbass is only paying the price, and in the most dangerous form for people's lives -the form of fascist terror and genocide. For 8 years, the Nazis have already killed about 15,000 civilians, incl. women and children <...> And we will add that it was part of such an environment that the fascist regime was established in Ukraine in 2014, excelling in every possible way in Russophobia, mercilessly crushing all dissidents and killing residents of the Donbass that separated from it ... Here, the fact is completely ignored that the territories that rebelled against the fascist dictatorship and expressed in referendums the will of the people not to live under the heel of the fascists themselves were "chipped off" by the peoples of Donbass <...> Actually, we can conclude that the KKE was mistaken in that they saw in the defence of the people of Donbass only a pretext for unleashing by the Kremlin imperialist war in Ukraine. This is true, if we take the ultimate imperialist goal of the war - the taking of the "post-Soviet space" under the control of the Russian capital. But this is not a pretext at all, but a real necessity from the point of view of the peoples - victims of the Kyiv fascist regime. (And the Ukrainian people too). And therefore, in this anti-fascist part, we support the war of the Donbass militias and the Russian army.

This is the position of the RCWP, based on three postulates: fascism in Ukraine, but not in Russia; the war against fascism is in any case just; in the imperialist aggression of the Russian Federation there is both a "fair moment" and a "negative moment", and they are scattered in time and logic. What could be wrong with such a position?

Firstly, the fight against fascism in the Donbass, as well as the existence of an appropriate regime in principle in Ukraine, still needs to be proven, and not just postulated and played on emotions. Over the long 8 years, the party could and should have studied the structure of the Ukrainian political system, the composition and alignment of political forces, how state power functions, etc. Unfortunately, the RCWP does not have any of this.

All that these communists managed to collect in 8 years as evidence of fascism are a set of scattered facts, episodes and events taken out of the general context.

In ideology:- nationalist ideology from the authorities;- language law;- law on non-indigenous citizens;- glorification of Bandera and other bastards;- demolition of monuments to Lenin and soldiers of the Red Army;- torchlight processions "Hang a Muscovite", "A Muscovite on knives",;- a mockery of history, the creation of an image of the great ukrov, etc. fiction. In politics:- 2014 coup d'état;- burning of people in Odessa;- prohibition of the CPU;- unleashing a punitive operation in relation to the Donbass;- the formation of national battalions - according to the fascist principle;- assassinations of opinionated leaders - Oleg Buzina and others;- reprisals against the bourgeois opposition - Medvedchuk and others;- the closure of any opposition media;- deception of the entire international community by non-implementation of the Minsk agreements;- continuation of shelling and provocations in the Donbass for 8 years;- open promises to deal with the Donbass by the method of "killing everyone";- The main thing is to increase the military potential many times over and prepare for aggression not only in the Donbass, but also in the Crimea.

Most of this list does not in any way prove the existence of a fascist dictatorship. The glorification of Bandera, the demolition of monuments, torchlight processions and nationalist slogans, "deception of the international community", the 2014 coup d'état, the buildup of military potential - these are not signs of fascism. These phenomena can exist and sometimes do exist even under a bourgeois-democratic regime, which may well be reactionary, but not at the same time be fascist.

Separate atrocities and crimes - like the tragedy in Odessa - no matter how terrible they are, do not only occur in fascist states. So, during the period of the Weimar

Republic, there were many crimes and atrocities, but no one talks about a fascist regime during that period. Even the murders of “opinionated leaders” do not only occur under fascist regimes.

If the RCWP really wanted to prove the presence of a fascist regime, then it was necessary to sit and study the Ukrainian political system, which they did not, and prove the following:

- The presence of a dictator; the one to whom all threads of Ukrainian politics are tied; about whom people could say “if he is here, then there is Ukraine; if he doesn’t exist, there is no Ukraine” and similar things.
- The presence of a dominant party, moreover, the most radical and most nationalist; at maximum being the presence of a one-party system (i.e., the prohibition of all other parties except this one).
- A state of emergency throughout the country, which means: a ban on strikes, rallies, processions and meetings, a significant restriction of freedom of the press and opinion. Perhaps even the dissolution of Parliament, the ban on almost all parties except the ruling most radical and the suspension of the Constitution. Return of the death penalty, and much more.

But to prove and demonstrate all this in Ukraine, at least, is quite difficult.

Secondly, if we accept them as the definition of fascism, the signs listed indicate that there were reactionary, sometimes fascist, regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq. So, the US did everything right by invading these countries. And according to the logic of the RCWP, the communists (primarily the Americans) were obligated to support these invasions. The RCWP is ready to support any imperialist aggression, if in form it looks and is presented as a struggle against the reactionary regime, dictatorship, fascism. What is this if not support for imperialism?

Given that, instead of actual research and evidence there is an appeal to emotions, this is exactly how it will happen. Indicative of the mood in the party is the material «Is it fair to fight against fascism?», where the author writes the following:

...until we are able to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and workers' democracy, we must support even a weak bourgeois democracy against any kind of fascism <...>... any war against any kind of fascism must be recognized as a just war. Even if this war is waged by a bourgeois-democratic state against an openly fascist one. Yes, we understand that such a war will necessarily be a battle between imperialist predators for spheres of influence and the division of profits. And yet the war of bourgeois democracy against fascism is a just war.

And the author of this text still allows himself to hide behind the Soviet experience:

The conclusion about the justice of the war of bourgeois democracy against fascism was made (not in words, but in deed) back in 1943 ... That is, it was directly said that in the war against fascism, the communists of the bourgeois-democratic countries should support their governments.

However, this conclusion was made in specific historical conditions and precisely for these conditions. Let us recall these conditions: the existence of a socialist state (USSR), the involvement of the largest and strongest socialist state in the world, the struggle of the imperialists against those who are at war with the socialist state, which contributed to easing the position of the socialist state in the war. Also, these conditions include the activities of the democratic and communist underground in fascist countries – that is, during the war, the communists in the bourgeois-democratic countries support the government, while the communists in

the fascist countries seek to overthrow the government.

In other words, the appeal to 1943 is only a pathetic attempt to justify one's position. Now the USSR is gone, it was destroyed by Russian capitalists, and those who are now in government are directly responsible.

Thirdly, the belief that it is possible to dismember a holistic situation and support only one of its parts without supporting the other – this is a mistake. The authors naively believe that this “special operation” involves, as it were, two stages scattered over time: first comes the anti-fascist part, and after the victory over fascism, there will be a redistribution of property, territories and other things. No, it's all happening at the same time. Russian imperialism is already pursuing its selfish interests, covering it up with the fight against fascism.

If the authors want to say that they only support actions in the territory of the LPR-DPR, but do not support the fighting in southern Ukraine; support only the defence of Donbass and the overthrow of fascism, but do not support the selfish interests of corporations, then it's necessary to say that in this conflict it is impossible to separate one from the other.

From this, none of the aspects of the RCWP's position are confirmed. The whole position is based on half-truths and personal conjectures, as well as the desire to defend and justify Russian imperialism.

Finally, in its desire to “critically support” Russian capital, the RCWP is ready to cooperate with the Russian reactionaries – nationalists and even fascists. There have been similar precedents, but the recent events are the most revealing. On March 20th, 2022, a “conference in support of the fight against fascism in Ukraine” was held. The conference was organised by the right-wing fascist party “The Other Russia of E. Limonov” (also known as the “National Bolsheviks”, Nazbols). Also in attendance were the notorious nationalist Colonel Kvachkov and the “Russian Imperial Movement”, a neo-Nazi organization that is listed as a terrorist group in both the Russian Federation and the United States.

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The conference itself broke down constantly, especially since no one would open their venue to radical nationalists. This problem was helpfully solved by the chauvinists from the RCWP, providing it... their own headquarters! At the last moment, the “Russian Imperial Movement” did not appear at the conference, and only Kvachkov and the National Bolsheviks spoke for the nationalists. But in the report on the results of the conference, they are simply called “patriots”, who supposedly cannot be anything here but anti-fascists.

The matter was not limited to a joint conference, where the unity of views was expressed. The head of the RCWP, Tyulkin, right at the conference, offered the National Bolsheviks joint political actions and the creation of a coalition. Is this not a direct betrayal of the cause of socialism on the part of the RCWP?

“Workers’ Party of Russia”

The small organisation of the so-called “Workers’ Party of Russia” did not stand aside either. Its leader and theoretician, professor Mikhail Popov, is another obedient servant of the Russian bourgeoisie who has long defended Russian imperialism. On the subject of this party and this professor, we have already released a series of materials in Russian, where we examined in detail their main concepts.

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The WPR has been studying Hegel and Lenin for decades and appear to many to be experts in the Marxist theory of knowledge (dialectical logic) and Marxism in general. They probably had to conduct a comprehensive analysis of specific events, clearly indicating the specific prerequisites for the armed conflict and the special operation, and reveal its true nature?

Instead, there is only a literal repetition of the Kremlin message (the forced nature of the situation, NATO threats, etc.), seasoned with its own myths about fascism for export and an extremely superficial view of the event.

...the complete annihilation of the LPR and DPR was being prepared, and the transformation of Ukraine into a single bridgehead, essentially a single US military base, and there was nothing more to wait, therefore, the action that is being carried out - a special operation for denazification and demilitarisation - is a forced operation, and it, of course, is not directed against the working people of Ukraine, against the people of Ukraine, on the contrary, it is aimed at breaking this fascist shell and preventing the use of American fascism for export on the territory of Ukraine.

The concept of “fascism for export” is already 16 years old, and during this time it has not received a serious theoretical justification, research or evidence. From the party of “professors” and “experts on Marxism” we hear only slogans and empty words, in which people must take their word.

This concept is based on ignoring facts, and sometimes outright fiction, ignoring the principles of objective reality and distorting Dimitrov’s position on the definition of fascism. We talked about all this in our articles criticising Popov and the WPR.

There, we pointed out that there is no fascism for export under a democratic system, there is no fascism only in foreign policy. Fascism, according to G. Dimitrov, is an integral phenomenon, an integral political system, embracing both domestic and foreign policy. Moreover, a fascist regime in a particular country cannot be a justification for a military operation against that country. Otherwise, these guardians must support some of the US operations that have been directed against extremely reactionary regimes.

The authors don’t provide any evidence that the current operation in Ukraine is aimed precisely at, as they put it, “breaking the fascist shell”, and not for the sake of some other, more specific goals (holding the sphere of influence, maintaining high ratings of the ruling party and Putin etc.). The local pseudo-communists do not see any other goals. What is said on TV is claimed to be the truth.

The same applies to the constant repetition of words about the “forced nature of the military operation.” This does not at all clarify the true nature, goals, objectives, motives of this operation. Any war-military operation is of a forced nature - it means the failure of other ways to resolve the issue. And military conflicts are always justified by something forcing the belligerent’s hand: the First World War was of a forced nature for Germany and Austria-Hungary (carried out for the sake of national security, to protect the Fatherland), the German attacks on Poland and the USSR were also “forced”, the US invasion of Vietnam was “forced”, and so on.

For Marxist analysis, it is not so important whether a military operation has a “forced” character or not. It is precisely the real goals and interests of the parties, the motives and plans, the nature of the combatants themselves (who is fighting with whom and for what) that are important here. Only these make it possible to comprehend both the true essence of the military conflict and how it is treated, and what to do in this situation.

However, for the WPR it is absolutely unimportant. They present this event not as a battle between different blocs, different capitalist states for spheres of influence, capital markets, etc., but as a battle between different political regimes, different forms of politics.

Russia's special operation in Ukraine is not a struggle of imperialists for spheres of influence, as the deceitful "pink" bloggers are trying to convince us, but a struggle between bourgeois democracy and American fascism. Of course, the Russian bourgeoisie will benefit from this, but this war should not be presented as a war between "Vlasov" and "Bandera". There are monuments to Lenin in Russia, there are Lenin and Marx streets, any communist movements are allowed. There are no more such streets in Ukraine, and even socialist symbols are banned. Even "social democratic" parties are banned. Streets of Bandera and Shukhevych appeared in the cities of Ukraine. There is a day of remembrance for veterans of the OUN and UPA - Nazi organizations. If people do not see such differences, differences in the form of a phenomenon, then they are definitely not able to understand the essence of such a phenomenon.

In the opinion of the WPR, the Communists are unable to "understand the essence" of such a phenomenon. This is a matter for the "experts in materialist dialectics" to handle, for whom everything has been reduced to the struggle of "democracy against fascism".

Professor Popov himself does not skimp-out on frank invention and stuffing his work with unverified information. For example, he repeats horror stories about the Ukrainian nuclear threat (22:52 - 23:16):

...Zelensky, this clown, has already managed to announce that he will be engaged in arming his army with atomic weapons. What? Dirty. They say we have the Chernobyl nuclear power plant there, we have a lot of this dirt, radioactive, well, we will spray it...

Reliable sources for such information were not given, so again there is an appeal to emotions. This is how the bourgeois professor Popov interprets the words of the bourgeois President Zelensky from his speech at the Munich Conference, where, in particular, the following was said:

Since 2014, Ukraine has tried three times to convene consultations of the guarantor states of the Budapest Memorandum. Three times without success. Today Ukraine will do it for the fourth time. It's my first time as President. But both Ukraine and I are doing this for the last time. I initiate consultations within the framework of the Budapest Memorandum. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was entrusted to convene them. If they do not take place again or if there are no guarantees of security for our state as a result of them, Ukraine will have every right to believe that the Budapest Memorandum does not work and all package decisions of 1994 are called into question.

However, there is not a single word about nuclear weapons here. It is the Russian media and politicians who assure us that Ukraine is developing nuclear weapons. And it is the Russian media that inflates the fantasy of a "dirty bomb", etc. (here and here, for example).

Professor Popov does not feel any responsibility for his work- there is no verification of their claims, nor concrete facts, nor logic. Here is another example:

The goal of Ukraine now is not just to return the Crimea, the DPR and the LPR, but to destroy their population by resettling Ukrainians from the west of the country in their place. In view of the foregoing, we can conclude that on the part of Russia and the republics of Donbass, the war is a liberation war.

But in this case, the question arises – why in 8 years Ukraine did not destroy the Russian population of Zaporozhye, Mykolaiv, Dnepropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Odessa, as well as the territories of Donetsk and Lugansk regions controlled by itself, and did not replace them with Ukrainians from the western regions of Ukraine? Our “experts” in dialectical logic and historical materialism, which requires penetrating into the very essence of phenomena, revealing its essence, inner content, and conducting analysis, do nothing of the sort.

So Professor Popov and his WPR show that they are incapable of a concrete analysis of the current situation, that they are masters of dialectical logic only in words. But most importantly, they proved their true class character – accomplices of the Russian bourgeoisie and defenders of imperialism, like the CPRF, on a much smaller scale.

Platoshkin and the “Movement for New Socialism”

Nikolay Platoshkin is another political figure close to the CPRF and supported this party. In 2019, he tried to create the movement “For New Socialism” and subsequently the “Socialist Party of the RF”. His program differs little from the ideal of the CPRF: the parliamentary path, the nationalisation of enterprises, a mixed economy. In 2020, the Investigative Committee of Russia opened a criminal case against him because of several videos on YouTube and placed the politician under house arrest. In 2021, he was sentenced to 5 years of probation and a fine of 700,000 rubles.

Despite the fact that in some places N.N. Platoshkin expresses quite sensible thoughts and remarks – for example, the government’s strange interpretation of the concepts of “demilitarisation” and “denazification”, the lack of clear explanations on these points, etc., his position is replete with sophisms, forgeries and classic bourgeois propaganda. From the next unsubstantiated allegations about the enemy’s Nazi regime to the fact that we are not facing a war, but “only” a special operation; from justifying the operation to proposals for the complete occupation of Ukraine.

Since Platoshkin’s position is largely identical to what we have already considered above, we will not dwell on it in detail. Instead, we will analyse just a few sophisms that Platoshkin uses to justify the special operation. He states:

...some more such intellectuals are talking about inter-imperialist contradictions there. Smart, right? Look here. When the American army advanced on Germany in 44, was America a capitalist country? Yes, more than. Germany was a capitalist country? Yes, certainly so. We didn't give a damn what then, in your opinion, which of these imperialists would win? So what? Use your brains sometimes!

This clumsy analogy does not change the established facts. The Russian Federation is an imperialist state that is not carrying out a “special operation” for the sake of pious goals, not for the sake of fighting fascism as such, not for helping the Donbass, but for its own interests (domestic, foreign, economic, corporate), for the sake of the interests of big capital in general and in the region in particular. And contradictions have developed between the Russian Federation and the US-EU against the background of the struggle for spheres of influence, for control over the region, etc. And no false parallels with 1944 will undo this. We have already dealt with the World War II analogy above.

But why did Platoshkin choose 1944 exactly? Why not recall the position of “such intellectuals” as Stalin and Molotov in 1939-1941, when the war between Germany and Poland-France-England was regarded as inter-imperialist, in which no government could be supported? Why not remember the position of the First World War? Or conflicts before World War I?

So we understand the following: Platoshkin is either a completely illiterate figure who takes the first events that come by as his examples, or a conscious demagogue who deliberately uses images and events that are beneficial to him, trying to drag them by the ears to his own position. In any case, he promotes false ideas and analogies, which only lead to wrong conclusions.

If the regime is indeed dictatorial, and indeed extremely nationalistic, then it will not be difficult to demonstrate and prove this. There is no problem with proving that there was a dictatorial regime in the Third Reich or that there was a dictatorship in Chile under Pinochet. But when it comes to Ukraine, then fictions, half-truths and so on, begin.

In this special operation, we are talking about the fact that the Nazi regime in Kyiv will be replaced ... is the overthrow of the Nazis in Kyiv - is it good or bad?

And what kind of Nazi in Kyiv was Platoshkin going to overthrow? Such fascist organisations as the National Corps, Right Sector and Svoboda cannot be overthrown, because they are not in power. Zelensky is not a member or leader of these organisations.

If he wants to say that both Zelensky and the currently ruling Servant of the People party are supporters of National Socialism, then it would be nice to demonstrate it. To prove that the regime in Ukraine is really Nazi, really dictatorial, that Zelensky is an all-Ukrainian dictator with unlimited powers, that the country has a one-party system, etc.

But instead of serious reasoning about the structure of state power, Platoshkin has, at best, separate isolated examples taken out of context and places support on emotions, and at worst, not even that.

The overthrow of the Islamists in Kabul - is that good? In Afghanistan, extreme reactionaries ruled for some time, who plunged the whole country into an open Middle Ages. This means that it was necessary to support the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and their entire military campaign there. Is the overthrow of the reactionaries in Baghdad a good thing too? So, it was necessary to support the United States in the fight against Saddam Hussein.

”Communists of Russia”

The Communists of Russia, a small spoiler party led by Maxim Suraikin, a native of the CPRF, also joined in supporting the special operation and is often accused of being even more of an accomplice to the Kremlin than the CPRF. In their position, they repeat the traditional rhetoric of the Russian bourgeois state.

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For example, the Stavropol branch of the party launched a flash mob in support of “valiant warriors.” Members of the party wore shirts with the letter “Z” and threw a heart to each other as a sign of solidarity. It is difficult to say which is worse: either solidarity with the Russian bourgeoisie itself, or the wretchedness of such “actions”.

Later, the Omsk branch of the party took part in a rally in support of the Russian army. The rally was organised by the local branch of the right-wing LDPR party, with whom they rhetorically aligned. And the representative of the “Communists of Russia” even stated the following:

I believe that every citizen of Russia should support our army. We need to speak up for ourselves... It's very good that our oligarchs' property is being seized abroad. It is like a balm for the soul for most of the population of our country. Finally, the West is forming a real political and patriotic elite in Russia.

Again, the communists and the working people are called to stand up for “their own”, but by no means for the workers, only the bourgeois army and the interests of the ruling oligarchy. It is out of loyalty for such “friends” that a party which considers itself communist proposes to speak – for large corporations, oligarchs and high officials, whose interests are represented by the army, whose interests are protected, including with the help of military force. It is “strange” that, for example, the communists Lenin and Stalin did not think of “their own” in 1904-1905 during the Russo-Japanese War, nor during the First World War.

The St. Petersburg branch of this party also took part in a patriotic rally in support of the special operation. Their press release is written like this:

Our servicemen and fighters of Novorossia, who are waging a war of liberation, are increasingly raising the Soviet red flag on military vehicles and over settlements liberated from the Nazis. Historical memory is like this: you can't destroy it with anything ...We, ordinary citizens of Russia, in this harsh time, need to unite so strongly and firmly so that we cannot be torn to pieces not only by external enemies, but also by internal traitors who continue to corrode our Great Motherland. For the first time, after the treacherous destruction of the Soviet Union, we have a chance to renew Russia in a just socialist way, an opportunity has arisen once and for all to cleanse our borders from mortal danger. Our Army fights with fire and sword, and we will fight in word and deed!

That is, it's necessary to rally around the ruling bourgeoisie in the name of their interests. And it is not entirely clear how we suddenly got the chance to renew Russia in a socialist way. There is no real Communist Party yet, and the “Communists of Russia” want to avoid a revolutionary situation in every possible way. Apparently, they are the type who believe in a “left turn” by Putin's supporters of the big bourgeoisie. We don't rule out that a “left turn” is quite possible in the socio-economic sense, but this will in no way rule out capitalism. It will be the same capitalism in the end.

Conclusion

So, as you can see, none of the more-or-less large and well-known Russian communist organisations could give a clear Marxist-Leninist position on current events. The blame rests with them. During 20 years of “calm” capitalist development, no sensible theoretical work was organised, and no united communist organisation was created. As a result, in a tumultuous historical moment, the communists were unable to influence the course of events taking place. This problem is typical not only for Russia, but for most other countries where the communists are similarly fragmented.

Our Russian comrades are working hard to overcome this crisis in the communist movement. We want to remind our readers that we support the Joint Statement of Communist and Workers' Parties which can be considered truly communist. We presented our position several hours after the outbreak of the events on February,

24.

Along the way, we encounter many obstacles, but we have the sufficient strength to overcome them and help communists in other countries to solve similar problems.

Original article