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# **Against the ravages of campism and for the victory of the Ukrainian people: The mass movement against the war!**

Sunday 3 April 2022, by [MITRALIAS Yorgos](#) (Date first published: 29 March 2022).

**Russian president Vladimir Putin seems to be accumulating mishaps and counter-performances in his war against Ukraine but, on the other hand, he is accumulating successes as... a benefactor if not a saviour of NATO! Who says so? Well, a person who is probably in the best position to make such a statement: a very high ranking American military officer used to speaking his mind and without any diplomatic embellishments and who, moreover and above all, has held the position of "Supreme Allied Commander of NATO in Europe", Admiral James Stavridis!**

The former Commander-in-Chief of NATO does not mince his words and that is why he deserves to be listened to when he says that President Putin "may be the best thing that ever happened to NATO"! And Admiral Stavridis explains why: "I spent four years as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander. At every conference, at every meeting of high-level NATO officials, I approached German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen. And I would say to them, "You have to increase your defence spending". I didn't succeed for four years. But in 48 hours, Vladimir Putin inspired the Germans to almost double their defence budget!

The logical conclusion of the above should be that those who hate NATO should hate its benefactor, President Putin, at least as much. And yet, it is quite the opposite. In the name of their righteous hatred of NATO, some go as far as to invent -and worship- a Putin who is supposedly the sworn enemy of American imperialism and NATO, while others take refuge in the abstract and idle pacifism of the watchword "Peace in Ukraine". A pacifism which in fact denies the right to effective self-defence to the Ukrainian population bombed and massacred by the armies of Mr. Putin.

Indeed, under the present conditions created by the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian army and given the overwhelming superiority of the latter, the only realistic perspective that could lead to "peace in Ukraine" would be that of... capitulation of the Ukrainians. And this is all the more true since all those who put forward this slogan while declaring themselves to be "in solidarity with the Ukrainian people" are also hostile to the supply of arms to the Ukrainian resistance fighters who would have to be satisfied with a few slingshots to confront the second most powerful army in the world! In other words, we support the Ukrainians, but on condition that they do not fight to win. Or worse, on condition that they accept to become lambs who sacrifice themselves on the altar of this "peace in Ukraine" of our pacifist wishes. And as the first interested parties, the Ukrainian feminists, shout angrily: "The anti-militarist feminists (of the Western countries) support the right of the Ukrainians to be victims and to cry under the Russian bombs". In short, Ukrainian men and women are only fully worthy of the solidarity of Western pacifists if they are submissive or dead...

Of course, it is no coincidence that this kind of cynical and even macabre "solidarity" is the result of

an approach according to which, by a sleight of hand, the ongoing war is not Putin's very real colonial war against the independent country of Ukraine, but the very fictitious war between Russian and American imperialisms. So, it is quite logical that the supporters of this kind of "solidarity" and "peace in Ukraine", who declare to be staunch anti-imperialists -but are full of contradictions-, always advocate a "diplomatic solution" of the war, which can only be achieved by the very bourgeois rulers of the very imperialist countries (USA, Russia, the main EU countries), and - obviously- behind the backs of the Ukrainians! It is equally quite "logical" that these statements and other anti-war manifestos of the left in Western countries never take into account and even censor and systematically ignore the dramatic appeals for internationalist help of the feminist movements, left-wing organizations and workers' unions of the first concerned countries, i.e. Ukraine, Russia and Belarus, about which they give the impression that they do not care at all.

That said, ***it is increasingly clear that March 2022 is tending to split the international anti-liberal left as much or nearly as much as August 1914!*** Obviously, as it was the case in August 1914, the current cleavages, ruptures and even differentiations in the international left provoked by Putin's war in Ukraine, do not fall from the sky. They were already there, some of them even for a very long time, but their intensity had never reached the current explosiveness. Moreover, it is in the nature of large-scale wars to intensify and thus reveal to the world the cleavages within the Left that usually go almost unnoticed outside periods of historical crisis.

It goes without saying that the zealous supporters of Putin and his arch-reactionary and obscurantist policies are definitely lost for the Left. Their "campist" drifts and, above all, their blatant incapacity to be moved and angered by the enormous injustices suffered by the Ukrainian people, already lead them far from the Left and nothing indicates that this distancing will stop halfway. But what about the others? Of those who are confused, chew their words, take refuge in "equidistant" and "neutralist" pacifism, closing their eyes to the massacre of the Ukrainian people and plugging their ears so as not to hear the cries of distress of the Russian and Belarusian pacifists who are so harshly repressed?

To say that the case of these comrades is already hopeless would be suicidal. Besides, the existential threats that weigh on humanity should forbid any fatalism. But, on one condition: that ***we lead a fight without concessions against the "campism" that undermine the workers and socialist movement by amputating everything that makes its essence and its core purpose: internationalism, solidarity with all the oppressed, class independence and active opposition to all the injustices and all the anti-democratic, freedom-killing and inhuman authoritarianism!***

So, let's discuss with these comrades, let's try to find convergences and let's launch the debate on the right to self-determination of the peoples and the national question which is more necessary than ever, because the problem exists and urgently requires solutions almost everywhere in Europe: in the East (Ukraine), in the West (Scotland), in the Balkans (Bosnia), and in the South (Catalonia). But, without forgetting that much more effective than arguments and debates will be the mobilization of those from below in our European countries, who although obviously shocked and frightened by Putin's war and deeply moved by the martyrdom of the Ukrainian people, are deprived of the means to influence the course of history.

Well, let's give them the means to express their feelings and to become actors, if not protagonists of history, this means which, in the present conditions, can only be the great popular movement against the war which we all need more than ever. And it will be in this movement against the war and in action, that the West European left will be able to better understand and learn from the anti-war activists of Eastern Europe that it has so misunderstood and ignored in the past...

But, beware: much if not everything depends on the final outcome of the war in Ukraine. The heroic resistance of the David that is the Ukrainian people against the Goliath that is Putin's Russia, is already impressing and inspiring the peoples and oppressed of the whole world. But, a final victory, even on points, of the Ukrainians will undoubtedly have cataclysmic consequences not only in Russia. It will be a tremendous encouragement and source of inspiration for movements and struggles for social emancipation and national liberation far beyond Europe! Without forgetting that it is only from these movements and struggles that can emerge the new internationalist, radical and ecosocialist left, which humanity urgently needs in these critical times...

**Yorgos Mitralias**

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