

Editorial (Posle): Not a single soldier for Putin's criminal war!

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"Posle" on mobilization: what to expect and what is to be done

On September 21, Vladimir Putin announced the beginning of a "partial" mobilization. This step came as a clear sign of the complete failure of Putin's "special operation": the army in its current state is unable to retain the occupied Ukrainian territory, and further offensive operations are out of the question. Only nuclear blackmail and an attempt to reverse the situation on the fronts by outnumbering the Ukrainian army can save Putin's clique from an ignominious defeat in this predatory imperialist war.

After six months of all out war resulting in enormous casualties, the Russian authorities are still trying to convince the public that everything is going as planned, and that only a small fraction of the population will be affected by the mobilization. Keeping to the strategy developed during the pandemic, Putin's regime does not call things by their proper names, inventing formulas which lie outside the scope of law. Just as two years ago, when instead of a referendum on constitutional amendments, "popular voting" was announced and instead of a state of emergency during a pandemic "a regime of days off" was put in place, now there is a "special operation" instead of a war, and instead of mobilization there is a "[partial mobilization for a special military operation](#)." Every word in this phrase is a fraud.

Indeed, we can already see that this mobilization will not be partial and could affect everyone. The executive order "[On the declaration of partial mobilization](#)" does not specify the categories of citizens subject to conscription and provides for a deferment only for employees of the defense industry. Perhaps only members of the Federation Council and deputies of the State Duma can afford to feel safe, since the law "[On mobilization training and mobilization](#)" exempts them from the draft. Thus, contrary to statements by Putin and Shoigu, any man from 18 to 60 and women liable for military service (including, for example, medical personnel) may be subject to mobilization. The lack of patriotic enthusiasm and growing panic mean that in order to meet the mobilization targets, the authorities will be compelled to forcibly enlist and send to the front everyone they come across.

The mobilization announcement looks like a desperate step and a challenge for a regime that had relied on mass depoliticization. There had been an informal pact between citizens and the state: "you stay out of the state's business, and the state remains out of yours." Now it is no longer possible to quietly watch the war on the television; people must die in it.

The mobilization is giving rise to chaos. Scores of people fleeing the country reveal a lack of popular support for the war. Yesterday protests took place in many Russian towns and cities. Yes, they were small and violently repressed. Yet, such a belated and cynical decision to announce mobilization shows that the Putin's regime has a visceral fear of spontaneous demonstrations and popular uprisings. In March it seemed that the decision to invade Ukraine would be fatal for the regime.

Now there are even more reasons to speculate about its collapse. At the cost of so many lives, Putin's system is trying to delay its demise.

The only way to end the war is to defeat Putin and his gang. Such a defeat must be inflicted externally by the victory of Ukraine and internally by protesting against Putin's dictatorship and disobeying his orders. Forced participation in the crimes carried out by Russia on the territory of another country is not an act of courage or patriotism. The most courageous thing at this moment is resisting mobilization in any possible way, from dodging conscription and setting recruiting stations on fire to acts of mass disobedience and sabotage. No to conscription! Not a single soldier for the criminal war!

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