

Statement on the deadly fight near Verkhovna Rada

Autonomous Workers Union

September 9, 2015

On August 31, the Ukrainian parliament, Verkhovna Rada, had agreed upon the first reading of the constitutional amendments in regard to the so called “decentralization”; these amendments also add the transitional provision that mentions the “special status” for certain areas in the eastern Ukraine that are occupied and controlled by Russian nationalist juntas — the “particular districts of Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts”, as the official text of the Minsk agreement denotes them. Immediately after the voting had been adjourned, the right-wing parties (UKROP, “Svoboda”, and Oleh Liashko Radical Party) joined forces with populists from Batkivshchyna party to begin a violent assault on the parliament building.

The real meaning behind the text of the amendments is lost to generalities and embellishments on the importance of decentralization and of the said particular districts’ self-governing status. At the same time, the authority of those subordinated to the president is worked out and articulated very clearly. Additionally, according to the changes proposed, the property of local communities will be transferred upwards, to elected bodies governing the city or district levels. “Local communities” will become an empty phrase in itself, and the common property of citizens will soon become municipal.

In truth, the peculiarities of the particular districts’ special status will be determined not by the word of law, but by the actual balance of military and diplomatic power in the region — that is, something that no voting in Verkhovna Rada can change.

And the leaders and puppeteers of the right-wing parties are perfectly cognizant of that fact. For example, whereas Kolomoisky’s UKROP had been engaged in the protests near Verkhovna Rada building, another group of his vassals — “Renaissance” party — had voted in favor of the constitutional change. Besides, the members of the government coalition who supported the amendments can also hardly be called “Kremlin’s agents”.

So what was the reason behind the assault and the ensuing death of three National Guard conscripts?

On September 5, the election campaign has been officially initiated in Ukraine. The incentive behind the commotion stirred by the right-wing radicals was to destabilize the situation and to further increase the level of “total betrayal” — panic epidemics which permeate the Ukrainian information space. To this end, a fight with some light-to-medium injuries would have been

perfect — but a murder is way off. In our opinion, the organizers of the assault have simply lost control of the situation. They have been talking about the “total betrayal” for a year and a half — after all, it is only logical that someone believes them and takes the notion close to heart. And that someone was Ihor Humeniuk — a patrolling officer in the Ministry of Interior battalion and a member of NGO “Sokil”, a paramilitary organization affiliated to “Svoboda”. He was the one who threw a hand grenade into the crowd of the National Guard soldiers and journalists, killing three and wounding about a hundred.

If such incidents can occur during the preliminary phase of the election race, it is hard to imagine what the right-wing radicals would be able to do in the course of the election campaign itself.

We are skeptical about the popular theory that right-wing riots were caused by some covert schemes of Kremlin, which are aimed to discredit Ukraine in that manner. However, we must admit that the right-wing radicals in Ukraine fulfill the needs of Kremlin perfectly. After all, the Ukrainian nationalist ideology is not much different from the clerical-conservative idea of the “Russian world”. The values set by both creeds are identical, and only their relevant nation-state projects are engaged in an antagonistic conflict.

Above all, a right-wing party strives for the unlimited power — which means they want to achieve for themselves the freedom of tyranny devoid of any responsibility for it. And anyone else in their worldview should be graciously given the permission to comply with repressive laws. We do not believe in success of right-wing parties in Ukraine at the nearest election — and we sincerely wish them a crushing defeat.

On the other hand, we are as well concerned about the strengthening of the ruling coalition and their authoritarian policies. It was difficult to call them angels in the first place, but the popular request to curb the right-wing radicals, however justified it may be, can provide them with a necessary initiative to build a police state in Ukraine.

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No to police state!

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