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## In My Own Words

Cooper Andrews

1<sup>st</sup> May 2023

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We find ourselves now at a crucial moment in the war where the precarious balance that was struck following the victorious Ukrainian People's counter offensive may be turned in the aggressors favor through weight of attrition. Internationalists stand at the front of this conflict alongside our fellow countrymen (by blood and focus of efforts if not by passport) and we have resolved to have our fate intertwined with that of this land's people. As the war enters an extremely crucial phase it's now more than ever that I hope my friends back home remember what is occurring here, after the initial excitement and media frenzy it is so easy to be jaded and look upon this conflict as merely another passing instance on the news, for talking head "experts" to debate, or worse still to complacently look at the albeit, plainly apparent incompetence of the Russian armed forces as a premature end to the war. This war is very much still in question though there have been many glorious victories won, the Russian state has at her means the accumulated resources of a vast empire and it will not leave this conflict without attempting to assemble them all against the people of Ukraine.

Victory in this war is vital to the freedom not just of the Ukrainian people but to that of the entire region and beyond.

Putin's nepotistic dictatorship reaches far beyond its own borders to maintain his revanchist regime. His dreams of empire are at the expense of Ukraine's people as well as his own and within his nation and neighboring puppets there is a burgeoning insurgency which threatens to boil over should his great gamble in Ukraine fail. Putin's imperialism represents a great purveyor of fascism (regardless of what certain weak-willed Turncoats may say while they stain the name of antifascism). A victory here for Putin will not only plunge this region into a dark period of authoritarianism from which there will be no escape, but it will also represent a victory for those who seek to recast the world in the image of the old, that is for those who seek to recreate the savagery of authoritarianism produced by those autocrats of, fascists under a variety of names.

In our hands there is a world to win and a fight which requires great sacrifice however the alternative is not an option. For us and everybody else who faces the shadow of putinist aggression there is only victory or death. Love and struggle ☒

As to what we do here we are nothing special, just another group of fighters with various roles. Our time is occupied with training and boredom interspersed between the thrill and stress of combat. I am privileged to be a part of the great struggle as I am and I hope that our efforts will give rise to a free Ukraine and beyond.