

# **War and social struggle**

Vladimir Platonenko

4 April 2022

# Contents

In Ukraine . . . . .	3
In Belarus . . . . .	4
In Russia . . . . .	4
Possible disintegration . . . . .	5

## In Ukraine

The worst thing Putin has done for Ukraine is to reconcile the authorities with the people. The president has been transformed from the object of universal criticism into the Ukrainian de Gaulle. The interior minister offers to arrest him to the Russian army in exchange for the civilians leaving the besieged city and becomes a national hero. The whole population of Ukraine, from the homeless to the oligarch, unites in a common struggle. As in the USSR in 1941, when Stalin called everyone “brothers and sisters” and people believed in his sincerity. If that war was a domestic war for the USSR, this one has become a domestic one for Ukraine. Kharkiv and Mariupol were perceived as Stalingrad, Leningrad or the Brest Fortress at the time. Remember how Vysotsky sang about the Leningrad blockade? “Everyone was starving, even the procurator.” Alas, not everyone starved, and none of the top officials died of dystrophy there. But it remains in people’s memory as the poet sang. The same will be said and sung about Mariupol or Kharkiv.

And when the war is over, all the hardships will be blamed on it. The hungry and homeless will be reassured by the fact that they have won. And the social Maidan, which was slowly brewing in Ukraine, will be postponed for a long time.

This was already the case after Krymnash. On the Maidan, many people said that after Yanukovich it would be necessary to take on the oligarchs. After Krymnash it was forgotten. Not before that. The fatherland is in danger. Now it is happening again, but much sharper.

To be fair, the contradictions between the authorities and the people, the difference in the interests and aims of the top and the bottom, have not disappeared. In the Poltava region, if I am not mistaken, 11 Russian tanks were confiscated from the villagers. 11 Russian tanks (abandoned by the Russians). That is, the villagers were going to plough on these tanks or use them as tractors, and the AFU confiscated the tanks. But so far such contradictions have been resolved in favour of the authorities. In the name of a common victory.

Ukraine has always been good precisely because it was the order of the day to kick out a displeasing ruler. This made it different from Muscovy, where the person of the Tsar was sacred. The exceptions were the Time of Troubles, which was ended by the merchant (i.e. barker) Minin and Prince (i.e. Pahan) Pozharsky. In Ukraine this has always been the rule. This Ukrainian tradition goes back at least to the Cossack times. How many Ukrainian Cossack atamans have paid with their positions, and sometimes with their lives, for “unpopular measures”! Whether this tradition will hold on now, I do not know.

It is possible that it will. It is not only the AFU that is fighting the Russian army, but also the territorial defence units. That is, ordinary people. Who now have weapons. They can keep them. They will feel involved in the victory and demand respect from the authorities. Who can’t just scatter them in camps like Stalin did with the front-line soldiers. But it can turn their heads. By redirecting their anger from themselves to the external enemy. Especially if the Russian Federation is defeated, but not finished off. Not to mention the fact that all this will happen after the victory. But before that there will be a holy war, in which the people and the party are one. The people and the government in this case.

## **In Belarus**

If in Ukraine the war has reconciled the authorities with the people or, to be more exact, the people with the authorities, then in Belarus it is rather the opposite. Lukashenko is not eager to go to war. In fact, he does not want to get involved in this showdown. However, he is forced to take part in it. Let it be at least simply by providing Putin with his territory for the army to pass through. And the question of the Belarusian army's entry into the war remains open.

The people do not want war with Ukraine. And they even organize sabotage on railways. Moreover, Belarusian volunteers are already fighting on the side of Ukraine. And in a separate unit. It is clear that in the future it will become the backbone of the anti-Lukashenko army. And on whose side will be the sympathy of the majority of the Belarusian people in the war of Lukashenko's supporters and opponents, one can imagine. And since the West does not recognize Lukashenko as the legitimate president, it must be assumed that the anti-Lukashenko army will have no need for food, equipment or arms. And it is most likely to win. The question is what will happen in Belarus afterwards.

Belarusian liberals have shown their worthlessness by ruining the 2020 protests. However, this will most likely not prevent them from pretending to victory ("We ploughed!") and laying claims to power. The more so, since the collective West will be on their side.

There are practically no Leninists in Belarus. Their niche has been occupied by Lukashenko himself, who promised to preserve the social state in exchange for obedience. Classical nationalists are weak there too — Lukashenko considered them his main enemies, and therefore suppressed everything connected with Belarusian culture. On the other hand, there are anarcho-nationalists. However, how strong they are, I can hardly judge.

Meanwhile, in Belarus, up to the events of 2020, there was a pretty strong conventional anarchist movement. Unlike the liberals, the anarchists did not give flowers to the riot police and did not urge others to do the same. No wonder many of them ended up behind bars. But even after that, as I understand it, there are quite a few anarchists in the Belarusian detachment fighting in Ukraine. At least that's what you can tell from the photos. So, unless the Ukrainian authorities or the Belarusian opposition "recycle" them (and most likely the Ukrainian authorities won't need to, and the Belarusian opposition simply can't do that before they win), then after the Luka victory the anarchists may become a very tangible independent force in Belarus.

## **In Russia**

The worst situation is in the Russian Federation. The most active, capable and educated part of the population is fleeing abroad or being ground up in wars. Some of the soldiers who surrendered to the Ukrainians have defected to Ukraine and intend to fight on its side. However, these men are too few to enter Moscow as liberators of Russia. The most they can hope for is that once the Russian Federation is defeated, its government will agree to let them return to the country not as foreigners and national traitors, but as full citizens. Maybe even particularly respected, but no more than that.

True, if Latynina is to be believed, there is a project of networking Russian emigrants, but what is behind it and where it will lead to is not yet clear. The fact that social Darwinist Latynina lays hopes for this causes anxiety rather than hope for supporters of social justice.

In today's Russia, with its monarchist traditions, any battle with the current regime is strongly associated with Navalny and the liberals, on whom he is most likely to place his bets, as Yeltsin once did. This has the potential to repeat first the era of Yeltsin, then the era of Putin. Let me remind you that it was Yeltsin and his liberal entourage who first ruined and robbed the Russian people, and then installed Putin to guard the loot.

This also means that it is the liberals who are directly responsible for Putin coming to power and all his outrages. However, they are determined to pin the blame on the common people and make them pay the bill that the West will impose on a defeated Russia.

And if in the wild 90s the Russian businessmen were saved from another revolution by gangster strife, which crushed a significant part of the active population (and not the worst, because in such strife first of all those who remained human remains were killed, while the worst scoundrels survived), now it will be crushed in the war (and in similar strife after it, when the soldiers who are used to rob and kill will return from the fronts).

Anyhow, unless some black swan comes to the aid of the Russian people RF will repeat the Yeltsin-Putin era, after which the country will most likely die out, except for Moscow and a few other regions where a "thriving economy" with a twelve-hour workday for the common man and elite restaurants and brothels for oligarchs will be established.

## **Possible disintegration**

Among other things, such a black swan could be the break-up of the country into regions. Which, by the way, neither Russian liberals nor the West want, because then it would be unclear from whom to take reparations. As a matter of fact, the unwillingness to pay (including in the literal sense) for the centre's outrages may be one of the reasons for secession of some or other regions. At the moment such separation is impossible, if only because it will be quickly suppressed by the federal army which the region will simply have nothing to oppose. But after Russia's defeat the situation might change, the federal army would be weakened and the regions would get their own local formations.

If the country collapses, the single chain of command will also collapse, and no one will be able to impose their model of economy on the whole country, from the Baltic to the Kuril Islands, as was done in Russia (it should be remembered that one of the reasons, if not the main one, for the first Chechen war was the rejection by Chechnya of the Gaidar-Chubais model of privatization). We have already talked about the chance to avoid paying off the reparations (which will try to be pinned on ordinary people, not businessmen and officials). Finally, the disintegration will enable the revolutionaries and troublemakers to escape the persecution of the authorities, if necessary, by simply moving to a neighbouring region, and if necessary, all to gather in one, as the activists from different countries gathered for the Maidan.

All this, however, will only pass if the collapse follows the Latin American model, in which all residents of the former province (whose borders do not coincide with the ethnic boundaries) have equal rights, regardless of their language and origin, and not the African model, in which members of one ethnic group consider the new country their own, while all the other residents are at best assimilated, at worst annihilated or, more often, simply turned into second-class citizens. In the African scenario, instead of a social struggle, we will get inter-ethnic confrontation.

The secession of Ukraine once took place according to the Latin American model, and in modern Ukraine there are many people with Russian, Jewish or even Armenian surnames as among the soldiers of the Russian army who invaded Ukraine — Ukrainians, with the discrimination against the Ivanovs and Kogans in Ukraine existing only in the inflamed imagination of the listeners of Solovyov and Simonyan. But the secession of Chechnya was an African process — it was not only Russians who faced discrimination from the Chechens proper, but also representatives of other ethnic groups. And now it is difficult to say which of the options will be followed in the event of a collapse of the Russian Federation. It will most probably depend on many factors, including ourselves, although, unfortunately, not only.

The Anarchist Library (Mirror)  
Anti-Copyright



Vladimir Platonenko  
War and social struggle  
4 April 2022

Retrieved on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023 from [avtonom.org](http://avtonom.org)  
Original translation.

[usa.anarchistlibraries.net](http://usa.anarchistlibraries.net)