**Four lies that shook the world**

 **A generalized confusion makes a solution of the Ukraine conflict very difficult**

by: Leo Gabriel\*)

Even now that history seems to be at a turning point and the Ukraine government has issued a law which apparently concedes to the Donbass region a sort of autonomy, peace cannot be trusted. Because under the building of lies which is cracking now, there are more than two thousand people who have been buried on ly by the fact that they have been in the wrong place at the wrong time, or becaused they believed in the propaganda of Western or Eastern superpowers.

When we participated in mid-July in a *fact finding mission* sponsored by the *Rosa Luxemburg Foundation* and organized by the *Network against far right extremism and populism* I could not believe my ears when we were listening to the mutual accusations between the leftist Maidan-activists and the members of the radical Left in the Donbass area. Again and again stereotypes appeared whose only purpose it was to justify a war which has been kicked off by the Superpowers EU, NATO and Russia.

**Gigantic misunderstandings or calculated war games?**

What seemed to be, at first sight, an enormously crude misunderstanding in the heads of the Ukrainian people and peoples, turned out to be the reflection of a calculated game in which the representatives of national and international interests who only had one goal: to win the battle at any cost. No means was cheap enough for the politicians of EUkraine and Russia to paint the other as a devil in order to involve themselves in a “war of sanctions” which inevitably ended up in a huge military confrontation threatening world peace.

If we try to synthesizethese lies which are still hanging like the clouds of a thunderstorm over the heads of 40 Million Ukranians, we get the following picture:

**Lie number 1: The events in and around Maidan which finally ended up ousting the pro-Russian president Yanukovich was the work of fascists from the extreme populist and militaristic Right called by the Ukranian in reference to their own history as “Nazis”.**

In the meantime an independent research has shown that even in the last phase only approximately 15 percent of the protesters can be qualified as nationalists and extremists from the far right. The overwhelming majority of the people on Maidan were anti-oligarchic, anarchist or promoting a kind of base-democracy or they became politicized on the run. It lasted quite some time until political parties from the Right or the Left were admitted to put their tents and political symbols like the banner of the EU which were carried by Julia Timoshenkos “Fatherland-Party” and other EU-sponsored groups.

How small the interest of the Ukranian government of the “chocolate-king” Petró Poroshenko and Arsenij and Timoshenkos substitute Yaziniukwas in reality, was shown in the middle of August, when the police of box-champion Vitali Klitchko, who in the meantime has become the mayor of Kiev, mobilized drunken hooligans to “clean up” the Maidan without even respecting the memory of the people who lost their lives so that these politicians could come into power.The official reason: there were too many homeless people who had spent their nights on Maidan Square.

**Lie Nr. 2: Vladimir Putin would after his adventure in Crimea also incorporate the Southeastern Region of Ukraine in the Russian Federation, in order to victoriously occupy Kiev and march to the doors of Vienna. Putin is like Hitler who wants to dominate the whole world.**

These often reproduced sayings, stressed by pictures which show Putin together with Hitler, did not only belong to the propaganda of the government, but are being believed by many if not most Ukraine citizens in one way or another. They are in contradiction with the fact, that just before the referendum in the Donbass on May 11th the Russian president himself had declared the he would not accept an “Anschluss” of Donbass to Russia.

That’s why the *Council of the independent sowjet Republic of Donezk* presently is working on a new constitution which is going to be submitted to a people´s vote which finally will decide wether the Donbass will remain an independent State or to be part of an Ukranian Federation with a certain autonomy still to be defined.

In this context the Vice-Premier of Donezk, Andrey Purgin recalled the fact, that already at the end of 2014 the German coalmining industry had rejected to buy Ukranian coal alleging its supposedly poor quality, what as a matter of fact would have increased enormously the already existing unemployment rate.

**Lie nr. 3: War is the only solution, because the other side rejects any form of dialog.**

This is wrong under any perspective. Most of the religious communities as well as many activists of the former Maidan (amongst others those belonging to groups from the independent Left) have pronounced themselves against the war. Others have been brainwashed by telling them that Putin had decided to invade the entire Ukraine.

On the other side also a majority of the population of Donezk and Lugansk condemned the military attacks and bombardment of their cities and villages claiming to seek dialog with their representatives.

In reality it was and is the European Union and NATO who reject until now to negotiate with those who are directly affected by this war. “They treat us as we would be infected by Ebola,” says Yana Manuilova, a jurist who is working on the new constitution.

**Lie nr. 4: The conflict is the result of a “clash of cultures”: the Russian people´s culture against the Ukrainian one, the industrial proletariat versus the peasant cultures from the West and last, but not least, between Communism and Democracy.**

This is not true at all. The Ukraine is a multicultural society, a sort of a melting pot with different origins in history as well in the West as in the East: there are Russians and Belarusians, Hungarians, Bulgarians, Polish and Tartars have shaken hands for a very long time, without any major conflicts. Only that in the East one can feel a stronger presence of the nationalities of the former Soviet Union, e.g. the Armenians and Azerbaijanis. The Ukrainians on both sides are predominantly bilingual (Ukrainian and Russian) and on both sides there are quite a few people among the younger generation who speak more or less English.

What is relatively trueis the fact that in the Donbass there exists still a relatively strong Communist Party which somehow dreams of a return of the Soviet Union, whilst in the West it is forbidden (a propos Democracy!). But exactly like in Russia the communists have arranged themselves with oligarchs like Rinat Akhmedov who has a great influence in the Donbass. More than on the payroll of Moscow many people depend on these oligarchs who are divided among themselves between centralists and federalists, only that in Western Ukraine they call themselves “nationalists.”

**Perspectives for a dialog between the Left on both sides of the conflict**

Because of all these lies and the fact that neither of the two sides gets reliable information from the other side, it is nowadays terribly difficult to promote an open dialog between the Left on both sides. For instance the groups and organizations who in the past have been actively involved in the European and World Social Forum are today in a clear opposition to each other and even worse: they are afraid of each other. In fact some of the voluntary fighters who participated in the Maidan-movement are presently encircled by the so called Self-defense Brigades of Donbass and feel themselves threatened in their lives.

And on the other side, just a few days ago Vladislav Wojciekhovski, an activist from the leftist Borotba-movement who are struggling on the side of Donbass, has been arrested and tortured by the Ukraine secret service in Odessa.

Searching for the possibilities for a political dialog between the Left I recently joined an interesting conference with the title: *War in the Ukraine and the politics of the Left,* which was held on September 6th and 7th in the *Ukranian House*, which formerly had been occupied by Maidan. During this event sponsored by the Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation under the coordination of Zachar Popovics, Nina Potorskaya and Volodymir Ishchenko numerous Human-Rights-violations have been denounced. But also the first steps were made for the foundation of a new leftist party together with some parts of the trade unions. Given the unstable security situation probably it will still take some time until this initiative will come off the ground.

And in order to make this possible it would be necessary to create in the West of Ukraine and all over the world a common perspective. But it would be also necessary for the Ukrainian civil society haunted by many atrocities of the recent past, to show their political will in order to create an appropriate political climate for this dialog-process to come off the ground. Our task in the West it would be, to facilitate the communications in and within both sectors of civil society .

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