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Notes of a war that is no longer news



We know that the first casualty of a war is the truth. Fortunately, POLITIKA has the collaboration of two journalists who were (and will be) in Donestk, and who frequently inform us of what happens there. This time it is Oleg Yasinsky, a Ukrainian journalist who lived 27 years in Chile. His word is worth more than all the daily propaganda of the media controlled by "the West." [N of Politika].

In recent months it is very difficult to make balanced analyses and project events, since it must be recognized that with all our arrogance and a supposed understanding of the logic of the Ukrainian-Russian absurdity, we did not know how to predict absolutely anything. We deny seeing what we feared so much, as our conscience often denies our mortality, we

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deny acknowledging the inevitability of this war. We are discovering the hardest thing about civil wars, what silences literature: the most painful deaths sometimes are not those of those who are closest, but those of those former friends, who due to the madness of circumstances, were left in the trench opposite, and with whom there will no longer be reconciliation, nor future jokes about these times of madness.



It also costs a lot to be a pacifist; Hating hatred and war, it is not difficult to understand that the current carnage in the heart of the former Soviet Union is not the product of any hatred, but of pure political calculation and professional media work, generous in distributing medieval beliefs and very poor in any rational expression. I find it hypocritical to speak of the hope of peace and to wish success to the negotiations, when the interlocutor does not exist. Ukraine for 8 years, is a base of NATO and paramilitarism, and always used all agreements with Russia and the rebel republics of Donbass to accumulate forces, arm itself, suppress internal dissent and continue to provoke its neighbors. If Russia stops or retreats, it loses the war. If European governments stop supporting the ukrainian government and allow its downfall, opening up the possibility of political, economic and military unification of the three Slavic states of the former USSR, NATO will have to acknowledge its defeat, which would nullify the new imperial ambitions of the US, forever burying its dream of destroying China.

I'm in Moscow and my former co-worker on a Ukrainian TV show, which we had before the war, is a refugee in Germany with her daughter. His younger brother, only 19 years

old, was a Ukrainian volunteer and was killed in the fighting in Mariupol. When the war began, in the early days, he left his poems and his guitar and volunteered in a nationalist battalion. He acted as he felt his duty, just as young Ukrainians were taught for the past 8 years, with anti-Russian and anti-communist slogans. It is the nationalist battalions that commit the most heinous crimes in this war. Its political commanders, well prepared ideologically, are Nazi commissars in charge of Ukrainian troops. They carry out orders from Washington and London. Was that boy a Nazi? What could he say to his sister? What good will my words or my silence do to you? Now she is promoting on social media the Ukrainian Nazi groups that for her are the "heroes of the homeland". His parents live in Crimea, always felt Russian and next to the Orthodox icon they had a portrait of Putin cut out of a magazine.

... And in the opposite trenches the Russian and Ukrainian soldiers listen to the same songs...

Russia like never before, is full of contradictions. We know that the origins of the Putin government are no different from those of the Ukrainian government and that after the sad outcome of the fraud called Perestroika, what Russia sought most was to integrate into the capitalist Western world, requested to join NATO, accepted secondary roles to avoid conflict, remained silent for decades in the face of the expansion of NATO and its permanent denigrating treatment of the Western media. The turning point came with the coup d'état in Ukraine, when the West brought to power the forces of the ultra-right, radically anti-Russian, who faced with the massive disagreement of the population of its eastern regions, bordering Russia and culturally much closer to Russia, than to western Ukraine that it now commanded, decided to start a military operation with bombings in the cities of its own country.

Faced with this, Russia supported economically and militarily the Ukrainian territories that proclaimed themselves independent republics and recovered the Crimean peninsula, where the population always felt more Russian than Ukrainian. Although today Ukraine demands so much the return of Crimea, during the years in which it was part of the country, it was in a total abandonment by the central power and at that time in 2014, it was threatened by nationalist armed gangs that promised to "send to Crimea the friendship trains" (a sarcastic expression that meant the sending of paramilitary thugs). Also in Crimea is the most important Russian naval base with access to the Mediterranean, which at that time, due to a growing NATO war activity in the region, was a very important factor. It seems that in

this period, the Russian government began to understand that it had no friends or allies in the European Union and that Russia alone would have to defend its interests as it could.



When the Russian army attacked ukrainian military installations on 24th February, it seems that in those early days there was an absurd hope of avoiding confrontation between the troops... It is hard to believe, but it seems that the Russian leaders thought that the Ukrainian army was going to defeat zelensky's puppet government, declare the Nazi groups outlawed and expel american and NATO advisers from the country, which would immediately stop the Russian military operation. Most Russians were dismayed by the news. Almost everyone has family here or at least close friends in this neighboring country so close to Russia mentally and culturally. Many of them hurried to write to the Ukrainians that they were wrong, that it hurt them, that they did not support the war, that those who decided it were crazy. And in response, many of them received photos of the corpses of mutilated Russian soldiers and anti-Russian insults of all kinds. This changed the mood of many.

In the first week of the war, thousands of people in Russia came out to protest. About 3,500 were arrested across the country, but after brief interrogations, they were released. The West expected an explosion of protests and brutal repression. The protests were promoted by all the networks and screens, entering the internet from Russia, from the first hours of the war, an anti-war campaign was seen more planned and more financed than ever. The Russian government passed draconian laws against anyone who spread "fake news about our military," but never enforced them. "The strictness of the laws is compensated by the non-obligatory nature of their compliance," the Russians say. The brutal economic sanctions and the even more brutal global campaign against Russian culture definitely united most Russians against the West.

The Russian army continues to advance slowly. They try to avoid urban clashes, attacking only military targets, but the weapons have no intelligence or mercy and there are many civilian casualties. Between 300 and 500 Ukrainian servicemen are also killed every day. The Ukrainian army, retreating, responds indiscriminately by firing through the residential neighborhoods of Donetsk and the cities taken over by Russian troops, leaving every day only civilian victims who since 2014 have not interested the Western press. The value of the military support that Ukraine obtained from the West will soon exceed the figure of the entire Russian military budget. In the hypothetical case of Ukraine's military triumph, this means an unpayable debt, with millionaire interests until the end of time.

In Russia, thousands of questions are swirling between civilians and the military. It gives the impression that a good part of the government has the same. How can a government, which so recently felt part of the Western world, claim to win a war against the system that decided to destroy it? Can the profound social change that Russia needs be supported by at least part of its government? If the government is definitely incapable, who would take over, in a town of such communal values still, but without any social organization?

A few days ago there was an exchange of prisoners of war. Among those who were returned to Ukraine were several members of the Nazi Azov battalion. Before, several representatives of the Russian government often assured that ALL members of the military organizations of the extreme right would be tried and unlike the simple military, none of them would be exchanged. This generated enormous annoyance in the Russian civilian and military world and strong criticism of the government, which already post-factum, with the usual clumsiness was justified by saying that the Azov fighters exchanged were

investigated, that they did not commit any crime against the civilian population and that in addition they are all in very poor health, amputees and unable to return to combat.

An official report says that 95% of former Russian military prisoners were tortured with electricity by Ukrainians. In general, the clumsiness and ineptitude of official Russian propaganda in the face of the efficient world information war is one of the enigmas of these times. The media war in Russia is being waged by volunteers, bloggers and the military, while government spokesmen say inconsistencies that quickly turn into memes. Thus, when under fire from the new artillery installations recently delivered to Ukraine by France, Russian troops had to leave an island in the Black Sea, the defense ministry said, that Russia did so "as a gesture of goodwill." If everything in Russia were done the same as the official media war, the country would surely no longer exist.

Meanwhile, from Ukraine, the terrible news continues to arrive. Intelligence forces and paramilitary groups continue to search for the enemy within. There are thousands of prisoners, torture and hundreds of unofficial executions of civilians. Former militants of the long-banned left are quick to denounce their former comrades in order to deserve forgiveness. Russian literature was removed from school curricula and Russian songs are legally banned throughout Ukraine, although 70% of the country speaks Russian as its native language. Throughout the country, they continue to demolish all Soviet monuments and dedicated to Russian characters. A new law was passed allowing the state to expropriate all property from suspects for "supporting the aggressor". In a small northern town, they detained the entire organization of young writers, accusing them of being agents of the Kremlin, since they wrote only in Russian and nothing patriotic.

A close friend, poet and editor, who was never involved in political issues, recently called me from a third country: his apartment in Kiev was raided by the state security services and he was accused of treason for representing "an enemy culture" and "the Russian world". With only what he was wearing, he got into his car and left the country. He was lucky, he was able to get out since he had a medical certificate of invalidity, because men up to 60 cannot leave Ukraine. He does not reveal more details, because in Ukraine he has children and grandchildren left. First hand I know dozens of these stories and not all with a happy ending.

Since there are so many casualties, more and more cannon fodder is needed at the front, and the authorities continue to hunt young and not so young. Yesterday on a beach in

Kiev, the police handed a boy who was sunbathing, an order to join the army. He threw himself into the river and was saved by swimming.



Oleg Yasinsky and Luis Casado, in Moscow, last April

Oleg Yasinsky from Moscow, Russia

Edited by [María Piedad Ossaba](#)

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