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Kiev Is Starting a War to Avoid a Revolution

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Despite its peaceful declarations, Kiev is gradually transitioning from massacring civilians and bombing Donbas cities to direct provocations on the Russian border and attacks on diplomatic missions of the Russian Federation. In international practice, such actions are an incitement to war. But Kiev does not have the slightest chance of winning a military conflict with Russia. What is prompting Poroshenko to embark on this scheme?

While the Kiev junta is waging war against its own people in the Southeast, throughout the country protests are growing due to a catastrophic drop in the standard of living of the populace. An increase in all utility rates is coming July 1. In particular, gas prices for the population of Ukraine will go up by 55-70%; hot water and heating by 40%; electricity by 10-40%, depending on consumption volumes; and centralized water supply and sewage by 78-96%. The greatest increase is expected in Kiev, where on July 1 the price of hot water for Kievans will increase by almost 70% and the price of centralized heating will increase by almost 60%. And this is only the first stage of price increases for utilities, which will continue to grow incrementally until 2017. According to First Deputy Head of the Budget Committee of the Verkhovna Rada Oksana Kaletnik, in 2015 utility rates will increase by 40%, and in 2016 and 2017 by another 20% per year. The veracity of these figures is dubious, since as of May 1, 2014, for example, the public was paying only 24% of the actual costs for production, transmission and delivery of electricity.

At the same time, the IMF is demanding a rise in rates for the public «to an economically

justified level», that is, total elimination of the system of state subsidies in the utilities field. Given that even now the total debt of the population of Kiev, the richest city in Ukraine, is approaching \$80 million, the new rates will be completely unbearable for Ukrainians. And this threatens a real disaster for all vital services systems. Its scale can be estimated judged according to the fact that currently, even before the rate hike, the company Kievenergo is cutting off hot water supplies to 754 apartment buildings in connection with critical indebtedness, and electricity cutoffs have begun in the Pechersk, Holosiiv and Shevchenko districts of the city. Meanwhile, winter is approaching. With the stoppage of supplies of Russian gas, the government is declaring an energy emergency, which could result in frozen residential buildings and hospitals.

But that's not all. As a result of a drop in the exchange rate of the national currency and an agricultural crisis in the country, some food products now cost twice as much, and medications 60-70% as much. These are the figures officially acknowledged by Minister of Finance A. Shlapak. In fact, consumers are noticing that the price of some imported medications has doubled or tripled.

At the same time, as Ukrainian Prime Minister A. Yatsenyuk has stated, the government will freeze the amount of the minimum wage and the poverty line. According to the conclusions of the authoritative Razumkov Centre, *«the freezing of pay raises, pensions and social benefits is connected with the fact that the economy in Ukraine is not working. A decline can be observed, both in industry and in other areas... In such a situation neither Ukrainian businesses nor the state budget have the resources to raise wages in order to support the population. This year real income and real wages are decreasing, which is creating an additional social problem in the country»*. Furthermore, the government is stubbornly spreading rumors that workers in the public sector and public servants will lose all bonuses. And although that bill has for now been removed from the parliament's agenda, in some regions public sector employees have already lost the bonuses they are entitled to by law. For example, instructors and librarians in Nova Kakhovka (Kherson region) lost a 50% salary uplift, and teachers in Berdyansk (Zaporozhye region) only avoided a pay cut by threatening to strike. Since March 1, 2014 bonuses for continuous service and exemplary execution of duties, amounting to around 40% of salary, were discontinued for public sector employees.

If bonuses are in fact discontinued, the salary of library workers, for example, will be a little over 1,000 hryvnias (\$83) per month, for doctors 1200 hryvnias (\$100), and for municipal civil servants 1500 hryvnias (\$125). But the average utility bill will reach 1100 hryvnias.

The situation is no better in the production sector. «We have been told that starting June 1 the work week will be four days, that is, we will lose 1,000 hryvnias from our salaries,» said a source in the accounting department of the Dneprospetsstal plant in Zaporozhye. The workers of Azovmash in Mariupol are being put on unpaid leave. Ukrainian Member of Parliament Yuri Shapoval has reported that in Kremenchug production has almost completely come to a halt, since the Russian market, which was the main consumer for Kremenchug's products, has been lost. There remain only tourism, real estate and wholesale trading.

People are simply being deprived of all chances for survival. According to a survey on the

employment portal HeadHunter, 54% of men and 58% of women systematically cannot «make it to payday». One out of five experiences financial difficulties at least once every 3 months, and only 20% of men and 11% of women say that payday is not critical for them.

Yatsenyuk's government does not conceal the fact that this kind of «price genocide» is being conducted in Ukraine on the demand of the IMF and completely copies the austerity measures in the European Union, with which Ukraine plans to sign an association agreement on June 27. In a speech in parliament, Yatsenyuk noted that the size of social benefits and public sector salaries need to be reduced as was done in Greece and Italy. I don't think it needs to be recounted how that ended in Greece and Italy.

While depriving its citizens of their last piece of bread, the government has no trouble finding the funds for a war against its own people. According to expert estimates, one day of the so-called anti-terrorist operations being conducted by the Ukrainian military in the southeast of the country costs around \$3 million. If military action intensifies, this amount will increase. It also must be considered that the men who have been drafted into the armed forces or joined the ranks of the private punitive armies are excluded from the economic life of the country, which clearly will not help the Ukrainian budget to recover. Furthermore, massive casualties among the Ukrainian military and horrible service conditions have already sparked mass protests in the western regions of Ukraine, which are most loyal to the Kiev junta. The mothers and wives of Ukrainian soldiers are blocking international highways in the Rovno, Ternopol, Lvov and Khmelnytsky regions. It is highly likely that the furious women will march on Kiev if their loved ones do not return from the army soon.

One cannot but welcome the peace talks which have begun in Donetsk under the aegis of Russia and the OSCE. But one also cannot ignore the fact that time is working against the Kiev junta, making an economic disaster in the country inevitable. That is why a war with Russia, making it possible to blame the total failure of the current government on «Moscow's aggression», is vital for the junta. This explains the provocations on the border and the ceasefire which does not reflect the actual situation, as the intensity of the battles is only increasing.

Whether or not Kiev has given up the tactic of inciting a war will become apparent from its position at the Donetsk talks.