



Victory to Ukraine!

Vladimir Putin's imperialist Russian state is renewing its offensive against Ukraine, ramping up its war right across the Donbas front, using tens of thousands of newly-mobilised conscripts.

Putin has no intention of stopping his war any time soon.

Stop the War (StW) campaigns for the Western states to stop sending arms to Ukraine and for an immediate ceasefire and peace negotiations.

The StW call to end arms shipments to Ukraine, if carried through by the West, would lead to a Russian victory, the subordination of Ukraine to Russian political power, a regime of terror imposed across Ukraine and the smashing of Ukraine's socialist organisations and trade unions.

If such a terrible event were to happen there would not be peace but a long-running guerrilla war as Ukrainians rightly resist Russian occupation.

Stop the War is run by people who are largely (but quietly) pro-Putin, at least in the sense that they view this war as a conflict between NATO and Russia, and in that conflict want the defeat of NATO.

An immediate ceasefire would leave the Ukrainians of Melitopol, occupied Kherson

and Luhansk oblasts to suffer under Russian occupation. And why should they live under Russian rule? We should remember what that means: mass arrests, torture, rape, vast looting, the destruction of all opposition and all elected authorities, and the imposition of a foreign police state regime.

Remember that 1,200 civilian corpses were found after the Russian withdrawal from north of Kyiv in April. Ukrainian investigators have opened files on over 50,000 apparent war crimes.

Self-determination

The Ukrainians have the right to self-determination. They are right to fight and have a right to demand weapons and financial aid from the West – in exactly the same way that the Vietnamese took help from China and Russia when they fought to push the US out of their country.

Why should the Ukrainians "compromise" with Putin in "peace talks", leaving perhaps 20% or more of their territory under Russian occupation? Since when has the left argued like this? Did we say to colonial, British-occupied India: we think a reasonable compromise would be that India should accept, to avoid any unnecessary nastiness, that Britain should continue to run Punjab and Bengal?



Only an idiot would argue like that. And yet that's what the StW position amounts to, at best:

"Ukrainians should shut up, surrender, put up with an occupation (so we in the UK don't have to suffer high gas prices and the disruption of our economy)."

NATO

The Stalinists of StW, plus *Socialist Worker*, and people that help them, make no sense when they argue that NATO caused this war. Putin caused this war by invading Ukraine to grab more territory beyond the areas he took in 2014. Putin is an imperialist aggressor, a kleptocrat and authoritarian.

Moreover, nothing Putin says about Ukraine is believable. In 2014 he said Russia would not attack Ukraine again. If he signed a "peace agreement" why would the Ukrainians trust him? No, Putin must be stopped.

There is no symmetry between NATO and Russia. NATO has no forces fighting. Some Western countries are helping a small power from being overrun by a brutal, aggressive Russian imperialism.

The blame for the invasion and the consequences of the invasion lie with Putin, and his state.

The StW "left" argue that the US/NATO provoked this war in order to crush Russia. Their "analysis" ignores the facts. The main EU states, Germany and France, have been very seriously affected by this war, which scares them. In the past, in 2015, they strong-armed Ukraine to sign the pro-Russia Minsk Agreements in order to stop the threat of war and continue trade with Russia.

The US has no interest in a war with Russia. Why would it need one? War has been bad for business, creating instability and economic disruption.

Weapons

The West did not want this war. The USA's policy is to give enough arms to stop Ukraine losing, but not enough to allow it to force Russia out. The West fears Putin's reaction if he was beaten in Ukraine, just as they fear the consequences of a Russian victory. The Western powers are alarmed by Putin's war and are scared of it spreading and escalating. The West has carefully controlled the weapon supply to Ukraine, denying effective tanks, long range artillery and aircraft to Ukraine. If the US wanted to it could provide enough weaponry to Ukraine to beat Russia. But it has not donated all the weapons Ukraine needs.

And you will not read about Putin's crimes on the StW website, nor will you find solidarity with the brave anti-war protesters now in Russian prisons or with the tens of thousands of Russian refugees who have fled to avoid fighting Putin's colonial war.

Workers' Liberty wants peace, too. But we want a just peace. The only democratic, stable peace will come after a Ukrainian victory.

That is why we will not march with Stop the War. Instead we will be helping Ukrainians and anti-war Russians to march on the first anniversary of the Russian invasion.

We demand Arms to Ukraine, Russian troops out of Ukraine, and support for Ukraine's fight for self-determination. ■

Contact us

Workers' Liberty are a socialist group active in the labour movement and in campaigns in Britain, fighting for a revolutionary alternative to capitalism and Stalinism based on common ownership and workers' democracy and consistent internationalism.

To find out more visit workersliberty.org, email awl@workersliberty.org, or phone 020 7394 8923.

   @workersliberty