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**25 years
since
the fall of
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Proceedings

25 YEARS SINCE THE FALL OF COMMUNISM

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25 Years Since the Fall of Communism

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PRIVATE ARMIES IN UKRAINE IN THE 21TH CENTURY: TRADITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The power of weapons has always been stronger than the language of diplomacy. This is why aristocrats from as long ago as the antique times tried to surround themselves with private armed servants, who, in case of danger, were supposed to protect their lord as well as his land, property etc. With time the scope of this phenomenon only grew, reaching its climax (at least in Europe) during the 16th-18th centuries. In some countries such as Spain or Poland, local elites kept whole private armies. A few centuries have passed since then and it is difficult to imagine non-state controlled armies in Europe in the 21st century. However, in spring of 2014 non-governmental troops in Ukraine became a reality. Some of them are funded by common people, others by oligarchs. A good example is the group sponsored by famous oligarch, Ihor Kolomoyskyy, the battalion “Dnipro”. Officially there are around 40 non-governmental voluntary battalions in Ukraine. Occurrence of such private armies will never lead to any good. Due to the low level of political culture and not completely consolidated nation, it is even more dangerous in Ukraine. In our situation only the formation of a single, strong state army and its provision with everything that is needed can save the country from a fully-fledged war with Russia.

Keywords

Army, National Guard, Private Armies, Ukraine, Volunteer Battalions, War.

1. PRIVATE ARMIES IN EUROPE: HISTORIC TRADITION

During the transformation of the medieval European model of the army organization, private army units belonging to the magnates remained one of the few stable armed formations at the time. At the beginning of the 16th century, some magnate families in the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania started creating military units that soon transformed into fully-fledged private armies. In the 16th and 17th centuries, private magnate platoons played a very important role in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The wealth and military power similar to the ones of the magnates in the Commonwealth were difficult to find anywhere else in Europe at that time. They reached the peak of their strength at the end of the 16th - middle of the 17th centuries when the annexation of the Ukrainian territories by the Kingdom led to rapid enrichment and strengthening of the private armies of several dozens of Polish and Russian aristocratic families. The number of the soldiers in the magnate armies and the state army was directly proportional to the size of the respective dominions of the magnates and the king. While state armies rarely consisted of more than 4,000 soldiers, "private platoons of Ukrainian magnates alone could total about 30,000 people" (Teodorczyk, 1978 47). The ability to relatively quickly mobilize large numbers of well-armed soldiers was the private armies', especially on the Ukrainian territories, biggest advantage compared to the royal army. The first effort in the Commonwealth's history to build a clear structure of the state army was undertaken at the Silent Sejm of 1717. This could have potentially led to the abolition of the private armies and diminishing of the magnate power. However, the Saxonian dynasty that was not well-acquainted with Polish problems did not manage to control the torn country and the above-mentioned decisions never came to be. Polish landed nobility and magnates did eventually realize that there can be no strong country without a powerful army, but it was too late.

Nobility controlled private armies were not unique to Poland. Similar units existed in Spain, Hungary, and on German and Italian lands. During the 17th century absolute power and so called "military revolution" (Roberts, 1967, 195-225). slowly but steadily made sure that the private armies were no more. However, this was not the case in Poland, which during the early modern times was minimally influenced by absolutistic ideas. Furthermore, such transformations happened slowly and sometimes only partially. For instance, in Spain the superficially powerful throne never prevented the rich families from amassing private armed units. We will start our overview of the phenomenon of the private armies in Europe from the Pyrenees.

The most powerful families in Spain owned hundreds of villages and towns and had thousands of subjects. For instance, Duke of the Infantado (Rodrigo Diaz de Vivar Gomez de Sandoval y Mendoza (1633-1657)) appointed 500 officials to oversee his estate. In the province of Toledo alone Count of Oropesa owned 18 villages

and towns (in total 100,000 hectares of land) whereas the other 70 noble families of the province owned 137 localities all together (Scott, 1995, 197-199).

Decrease of the military power of the Spanish aristocrats as a result of the strengthening of the royal positions was a slow process. Even though the demilitarization of the nobility was seen as the most important element of the submission to the absolutism, in the 16th and 17th centuries big landlords still had power to use force (Skworoda, 2014, 191-209). In 1638 to crush a rebellion at Evora, the Duke of Medina Sidonia used 300 cavaliers and 8,000 infantrymen that he had drafted from his own estate and the estate of his cousin, Marquis of Ayamonte (Scott, 205). The declared monopoly of the king on the use weapons was a myth. And the weapons were not stored exclusively in the state armories either. At the end of the 16th century, while the majority of caballeros owned horses, rapiers and arquebuses, aristocrats possessed fully-fledged arsenals with ordnance, fire arms and other equipment. In the middle of the 17th century, the Marquis of Las Navas had 25 cannons which he lent to the king in 1637. And Duke of Medina Sidonia had 42. Over 400 muskets and arquebuses were stored in the armory of Duke of the Infantado in Guadalajara. Madrid did not simply want to diminish noblemen's power. On the contrary, its politics were directed at the preservation and exploitation of it under strict state supervision, even if it sometimes failed to do so. Some regions, e.g. Catalonia, used their own platoons to fight the control of the state (Elliott, 1989, 75).

Similarly strong was the position of aristocracy in Hungary. The Habsburgs were unable to pay their soldiers enough, so local landlords used private armies to protect big parts of the border with Turkey (Scott, 1996, 168). Furthermore, during the Thirty Years' War, Vienna tried to maintain peace with the Ottomans, which is why the Hungarian front received very little support. Consequently the number of fortresses held by the royal forces decreased from 120 (at the end of the 16th century) to 88, and the number of soldiers fell from 22,000 to 17,000. The system of Habsburg controlled guard outposts also proved to be defenseless. Thus, aristocrats, whose lands were close to the border, actively participated in the defense of these territories from the Turkish raiders. In addition to the military force, peasants were attracted to settle here. They were supposed to protect these lands in exchange for tax exemption. Similar tasks were undertaken by vlachs and uskoks in Croatia and Slavonia. The number of hajduks also grew at the beginning of the 17th century. In this manner, the system of garrisons that were formerly under the control of the central government was replaced by a number of fortified settlements, protected by the peasants and hajduks and controlled by the local landlords and royal officers. This defense structure led to a closer cooperation between the royal forces and the soldiers of the local landlords (Barker, 1982, 42-45; Geza, Fodor, 2000, 59-60). Hungarian elites only lost the need to amass their own substantial military forces at the end of the 17th-18th century, when the central government finally established a permanent army there. Instead they provided the royal army with a defined amount of grain, meat and horses.

In the traditionally decentralized German principalities and on the lands of the Holy Roman Empire, it was also possible for the local aristocrats to amass numerous private armies. For instance, Franconian duke Darius von Hesberg threatened the bishop of Bad Mergentheim with attack, using 2,000–3,000 infantrymen from his estate and 300 enlisted cavaliers (Zmora, 1997, 114–115).

Despite great lengths that the French crown went to in order to strengthen the myth about the solidity of the royal army which fought only for the glory of the monarch, the strongest and most effective ties continued to be between soldiers and commanders from the same regions. They were bonded by still persistent patronage (Scott, 138). For example, in the 3rd quarter of the 16th century the royal army that had a unique right to use weapons consisted of formerly private platoons only united by a common command (Wood, 1996, 144). In the remote provinces such as Picardy, in the 16th century it was impossible to imagine a society free of client-patron relationships. They continued to exist later in the military, administrative and political spheres (Neuschel, 1989, 84).

The army of the Republic of Venice in 16th-17th centuries kept its traditional structure. The permanent core of the army was made up of professional soldiers, which, at times of war, were joined by mercenaries and volunteers and were supported by relatively familiar with the military affairs militia. Similar structure was used by most of the big centralized states, such as Sweden or England (Mallett, Hale, 1984, 485). It was not the case in the rest of the independent Italian states. In Tuscany, in addition to his own garrisons and private guard, Duke Cosimo II was forced to call upon the help of the local landlords and foreigners.

A rather distinct situation was in Muscovy where Tsarist autocracy was born during the reign of Tsar Ivan III (1440-1505) and reached its peak in the 18th century. At the beginning of the 15th century, the army of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy consisted of numerous autonomous military units that were not easy to control. Boyars, mercenaries, courtiers and service people from the provinces all were a part (a good example would be campaigns against Novgorod in 1470 and Tver in 1485). Boyars brought their own soldiers, who first and foremost listened to their lord-commanders. Members of the ruling family and other dukes acted in a similar manner enlisting their retinue. During a military campaign, commanders of separate units were given certain posts and duties. These duties as well as the location of a unit mirrored the position of the commander at the royal court. Good knowledge of the art of war and successes on the battlefield could also lead to promotions and strengthening of one's influence (Stevens, 2010, 37).

The process of involvement of once independent smaller princes into Moscow's sphere of influence wasn't aggressive. During the first half of 1520s, Moscow's elites were no longer either disorganized or unruly. On the contrary, everyone declared loyalty to the court which decided their fates and where different privileges came from. Political consolidation had direct impact on the army. Successful military service led to a higher position at the court and created the possibility to accumulate

riches and political authority. Muscovy quickly obtained new territories, which were fully politically and socially integrated during the first half of the 16th century. This greatly influenced the army as well. The princes that used to command their own retinues and fight under their own banners gradually lost independence. In the state army, regional, ethnical and religious differences were minimized (Stevens, 2010, 37). While members of old aristocratic families now composed a single officer corps, their once diverse platoons were transformed into a united armed force under the command of the Grand Duke or his proxy. At the same time aristocrats and children of boyars who served in the manorial cavalry also provided a number of armed servants depending on the size of their estate. Still, all of them were to obey the high command. However, during the Livonian War, this system wasn't working well anymore because of the poor state of the domestic economy.

Strengthening of absolutism in any country automatically led to the increase of the number of the soldiers of the royal army and gradual disappearance of the private armies of the noblemen. Only the states that had developed bureaucratic apparatus could afford maintaining strong armies. According to the author of the concept of the "military revolution", Michael Roberts, contemporary art of war made the creation of the contemporary state possible and necessary (Roberts, 1967, 201). The states where absolutism went through all stages of development and did not stop half-way through, like it did in Spain, managed to eventually become very powerful thanks to quantitative and qualitative growth of their armies.

To conclude, we can state that the private platoons in the 16th-17th centuries existed almost all around Europe, despite the efforts to belittle or demolish them. Personal client relationships that were characteristic of the private armies continued to live in the state (royal) armies. So it is clear that even in the 17th century private and state armies were not isolated formations. However, in some states, such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, private military formations continued to be a very powerful force that consisted of many more soldiers than the royal army.

2. VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS IN UKRAINE: PRIVATE ARMIES OF 21ST CENTURY

A few centuries have passed since then and it is difficult to imagine non-state controlled armies in Europe in the 21st century. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of "private armies" has not ceased to exist and has reached our times in a different form. Italian mafia, immortalized by Mario Puzo, was virtually a modified version of a private army. Consisting of tens of armed people controlled by one person, it carried out different tasks. Similar to this were Russian mobsters that appeared after the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, both were not numerous in comparison to regular armies and were under the constant supervision of the local Special Forces that often cooperated with them. Russian aggression in Crimea in February 2014

gave impetus to the creation of volunteer battalions in Ukraine, which in the short term can become full-fledged private armies.

The Russian Federation's intervention in Crimea, which began on February 27th, 2014 showed that the Ukrainian police and army alone were unable to protect state sovereignty. The police had been discredited during the Euromaidan protests against President Victor Yanukovych, as it had been used for intimidating, harassing, and beating protesters and thus lost the trust of society. Moreover, some officers of "Berkut" riot police, who had used firearms against Euromaidan, joined the separatists.

While the Ukrainian army was not involved in Euromaidan, it had been systematically destroyed by the Yanukovich team and its predecessors since 2011. The police and army were unreformed and suffered from chronic corruption. The Ukrainian army did not have resources to react quickly or the skills to protect the country from small bands of mobile terrorists. At the time of Crimea's annexation, despite a Ukrainian military that officially numbered in the hundreds of thousands, Kiev could only count some 6,000 battle-ready soldiers. By the time the Russians began fomenting unrest in Donbas, military detachments had begun to move eastward but a lot of equipment and vehicles were broken and old. The situation became critical. Some units of the police and local Security Service of Ukraine in eastern Ukraine reneged on their service oaths and actively handed over weapons and administration buildings.

In the same time, protesters in Kiev raised the alarm and demanded that they be armed in order to leave the capital and protect Ukraine. Former Euromaidan self-defense Head, Andriy Parubiy, who had just been appointed to the position of Secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, gathered a group of newly appointed senior members from several ministries in order to search for a legal way of arming people who wanted to protect their motherland.

The first solution was found in the Ministry of International Affairs. The National Guard of Ukraine was created in the basis of existing Ministry of International Affairs unit called "Interior Troops". Those troops had been used as human shields to protect Kyiv's government district from protesters and had not been involved in beating the protesters ("Ukraine's volunteer battalions: the new model army").

Volunteer battalions received basic resources from Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) or Ministry of Defense, but that was far from enough to create effective units. Modern equipment for the volunteers was provided with the help of the Ukrainian public such as civil activists, businessmen and MPs. There are numerous volunteer groups of civilians who help to equip these battalions. There are hundreds of little vans from all over Ukraine that transport aid to the army and police forces. That is the way volunteer battalions often look like "international united forces". Weapons are provided by the MIA and Ministry of Defense. After a detachment is formed, it officially receives weapons according to the staff list ("Ukraine's volunteer battalions: the new model army").

Today in Ukraine there are about 50 volunteer battalions (more than 13,000 soldiers). Most of them are not well known, bringing service in the rear or protecting communications. However, 10-15 are located on the front, stopping Russian aggression.

At first sight, Ukrainian volunteer battalions are not private armies. Officially, all of them except “Right Sector” are state military troops as a part of MIA or National Guard. However, it is unofficially. The best-known and best-armed battalions (for example Donbas, Dnipro and Azov) that would be discussed below, were created with money from oligarchs, mostly Igor Kolomoyskyy. Now they also are paid from private pockets due to the economic crisis and the state budget deficit. The officers in these battalions are people of Igor Kolomoyskyy. Volunteer battalions are independent military forces. Cooperation between the Armed Forces and the National Guard on the one hand and volunteer battalions on the other hand is very bad due to the lack of trust. As we can see in reality, volunteer battalions serve those who pay money just like the private armies several centuries ago.

Next we briefly examine the history of creation, structure and system of maintenance of five most famous Ukrainian volunteer battalions.

Donbas

The Donbas Battalion is one of the most popular volunteer battalions in Ukraine. Based in the Donetsk Oblast of eastern Ukraine, the battalion has taken a particularly pro-active role in the campaign against separatism. The leader of the battalion is the outspoken Semen Semenchenko (now the deputy of Ukrainian Parliament), a self-identified ethnic Russian from Crimea who later moved to the city of Donetsk (Dunnett, 2014).

In mid-April 2014, Semen Semenchenko wrote on his Facebook page about entry to the Donbas Battalion and raising money. However, officials of the Donetsk region did not support his initiative. “We are faced with serious opposition. Governor did nothing. Only in the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast’ we were able to form our battalion due governor Kolomoyskyy and his deputies Filatov and Korban”. As a result, Donbas Battalion was formed as a structural unit of regiment Dnipro-1. The Donbas Battalion recruits fighters from all over Ukraine and is heavily represented by natives of eastern Ukrainian regions.

Semenchenko said that the first weapons he and his colleagues took was only in May by attacking one of the terrorists’ checkpoints. Currently, the Donbas Battalion is armed with small arms and sniper rifles.

Soldiers in the Donbas Battalion hope to get paid as their colleagues in the National Guard (in the National Guard reported that their soldiers have 3,000 UAN (150 USD) per month but many soldiers say they have only 70 USD per month). “It is a very small amount. To dress, shoes and equip one battalion you need 4.5 million USD. Normal soldier equipment costs 15,000 UAN (750 USD)”,

said Semenchenko. He denies that his battalion is financed by Igor Kolomoyskyy. According to Semenchenko, the battalion is supported by the donations of the people.

Dnipro-1

Widely referred to as the Dnipro Battalion, Dnipro-1 is reportedly organized and funded by Ukrainian businessman turned Dnipropetrovsk regional governor, Ihor Kolomoyskyy. He is also the president of the United Jewish Community of Ukraine, and has been an important figure in Ukrainian politics, particularly in his support for pro-European political factions. The battalion has taken part in fighting against separatism in the Donetsk Oblast, and is also charged with maintaining security in neighboring Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, the main eastern stronghold of the Ukrainian government and army (Dunnnett, 2014)..

The commander of Dnipro-1 is Yuri Bereza. “We built our system on the principle of Swiss regular army. With Russians in the east without army we will not be able to live”, said Bereza. “Now we need to have clear sense, power and capabilities to protect our land. Putin must know that if he go to the Dnipropetrovsk region – every window, every building will be a barricade”.

Soldiers of Dnipro-1 have black uniforms and armed by small arms, including assault rifles AKS-74U and AK-74. According to Gennady Korban, assistant of Igor Kolomoyskyy, privates in this well-supplied battalion are paid 1,000 USD a month and officers between 3,000 and 5,000 USD. According to some insider information, Igor Kolomoyskyy monthly spends about 10 million USD to the 3,000 soldiers of his “volunteer” battalions (“Volunteers Bolster Ukraine’s Fighting Force”).

Aidar

Along with the Donbas and Dnipro, the Aidar Battalion was one of the most visible and notorious volunteer units fighting in eastern Ukraine. Aidar operated primarily in the Luhansk Oblast, and is named after the most prominent river in the region.

The battalion is particularly diverse in its geographical makeup with 60 percent of its members hailing from the eastern Ukrainian Donbas region. Well known Nadiya Savchenko, a former Ukrainian pilot who is now imprisoned in Russia on what has been described as politically-motivated charges was a member of the battalion when she was captured by pro-Russian rebels in June 2014.

Aidar Battalion is made up mostly of Donbas residents who volunteered to fight against the Kremlin-backed gunmen. They hope to use their knowledge of the Donbas, including the Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts, to secure a homefield advantage victory for Ukrainian forces.

The battalion has taken heavy losses in the conflict. While the soldiers are popular in Ukraine, some members of Aidar were criticized by an Amnesty International

and other human rights organizations for abuses against civilians and enemy combatants (Dunnett, 2014).

Azov

Azov Battalion is the most controversial among self-organized military battalions in Ukraine. Named after the Sea of Azov, which is located to the southeast of the country, the battalion is currently involved in supporting the defense of Mariupol city from possible incursions from pro-Russian rebels and the regular Russian army. The Azov Battalion is largely Russian-speaking and composed of volunteers from eastern and central Ukrainian regions (Dunnett, 2014). In addition, several foreigners have participated in the unit, most notably a Swedish national with far right political views (“Swedish volunteer sniper Mikael Skillt fighting in Azov Battalion”).

Azov Battalion officially is a part of MIA. The battalion is based in Berdyansk and Mariupol. Battalion Azov live thanks to volunteer money but is accountable to the MIA. “We should receive a salary of police officers (4600 UAN – 230 USD) but we did not see this money yet. We live thanks to help of businessmen, MPs and ordinary people. From the state we received only weapons”, said Igor Mosiychuk, who cooperates with Azov battalion.

Azov battalion has received specific attention from media for its apparently Nazi-inspired unit symbol and the far-right ideology of its leaders. The battalion denies any fascist affiliation, but investigative reporting including by The Guardian has indicated that many members of the battalion do harbor worrying political views, even if most deny support for neo-Nazism (“Azov fighters are Ukraine’s greatest weapon and may be its greatest threat”).

The Azov Battalion enjoys direct support from Ukraine’s president Petro Poroshenko, and has long been seen as perhaps the most effective volunteer fighting force in the east. It is for this reason that some observers have worried about the battalion’s future political influence.

Right Sector

Right Sector is a nationalist Ukrainian political party that also commands a small number of volunteers in the conflict zone of eastern Ukraine. While Right Sector played a visible role at the final stage of the Euromaidan protest movement, its forces in eastern Ukraine have been minimal. The battalion had a handful of volunteers who participated in the defense of the Donetsk airport until its fall into rebel hands in late January.

The battalion is probably the most feared among the local eastern Ukrainian population, largely the result of extensive Russian propaganda which portrays the group as violent anti-Russian fascists. However, Kiev largely denounces the battalion, which has refused to submit itself under the authority of the MIA (Dunnett, 2014).

Recently the need for joining volunteer battalions to the Armed Forces and the National Guard was so urgent that even the Ukrainian General Staff began take the first steps in this direction. Volunteer battalions participating in the anti-terrorist operation in the Donbas have fulfilled their mission and are currently turned into regimental troops of the National Guard and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Lieutenant Volodymyr Babenko said that “the volunteer battalions have fulfilled their tasks at the first stage. I presume that we have raised patriotism in the country. Unfortunately, not all battalion commanders were responsible. The current situation forces us to invite all men who think they know how to fight (if they do not we will teach them) to join the National Guard and the Armed Forces of Ukraine detachments”. The first became battalion Aidar, accepted for the Armed Forces of Ukraine as the 24th infantry assault battalion (“Volunteer battalions participating in the ATO will do military service under contracts with National Guard and Armed Forces of Ukraine”).

3. THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE UKRAINIAN VOLUNTEER BATTALIONS

Several of the volunteer battalions are wildly popular among the Ukrainian population, raising the possibility that the units and their leaders will play a critical role in politics after the conflict. The volunteer battalions carry public support for their instrumental role in preventing the advance of pro-Russian forces deeper into Ukraine. However, their statute and role in the conflict is often overstated, largely as a result of public relations campaigns and willingness to speak with reporters compared to regular units of the Ukrainian military. It’s also notable of the roughly 50 volunteer battalions operating in Ukraine, only a handful play an active combat role or have been accused of abuses. Most battalions are understaffed, underfunded, and relegated to protecting key infrastructure deep inside Ukraine or manning checkpoints.

The most important and powerful battalions, however, regularly express their disapproval with Ukrainian authorities, threatening to take a more active political stance if their demands for anti-corruption measures and the lustration of former officials remain unfulfilled. While a handful of leaders, including the leader of the Donbas Battalion, earned seats in parliament as part of larger electoral blocs, the future influence of the volunteers remains to be seen. Given the protests and political pressure that surrounded Aidar Battalion’s de-mobilization, many observers consider that the battalions could very well play a destructive role in the politics of Ukraine even after the end of the conflict (Dunnett, 2014).

Occurrence of such private armies would never lead to any good. We have nine reasons for this:

1. Today, battalions’ creation more often looks like chaotic process than planned deployment of Special Forces. A complete list of voluntary detachments is

being constituted, but obviously, both their exact place in the ATO forces hierarchy and subordination system can not be clearly explained. On the one hand, it is natural because no one will stop those people who are equipped (and sometimes even armed) without national financial assistance and going to fight voluntarily. On the other hand, this is the first bell, a new force which does not need any approval, co-ordination and therefore, cannot be controlled is developing and equipping itself with the arms and obtaining battle experience.

2. The next point consists in selection process and battle training. Practically, there is no elimination process and yet the preparatory course is extremely brief. As a result, people with different reasons, mental conditions, habits and behavior could land in the detachments and that will inevitably lead to negative consequences. Only right-wing organizations' activists during their trainings conducted a real selection, prolonged preparation and developed teamwork. But they also have many gaps because of inability to get both instructor, and material resources for some areas. Unfortunately, those factors immediately affect the statistics of injured and killed individuals.
3. Preparation and observance of procedures in different areas, such as arrest, detention and interrogation performance. Such preparation is still urgent, even taking into consideration those cruel regulations and amendments adopted by Parliament by means of which any human rights in the ATO zone were liquidated. A person who is authorized to deprive somebody of freedom should be aware of such action purpose and do this according to the rules and prescribed procedures. Thus, he realizes that he has concerted actions are recorded so he does not do this because of his own caprice. Interrogation performing skills are required so as to obtain information by means of psychological tools, but not tortures. There are too many examples of illegal deterioration in our country which lead to lawless violence and abasement. Those examples should not be cultivated in the area where volunteers are fighting. Such a negative experience will then spread in a much worse forms.
4. "It is easy for you to judge, sitting in the couch, but there, when your friends are dying, many people transcend the limits". It is the most popular argument to justify different unlawful actions. A war actually forms a good, to such an extent convenient explanation that by its means could be explicated nearly everything. But there is alternative truth of the civilized world. If it is war, there are also some rules during the war. The Geneva Convention, European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and other documents guarantee that no one shall be subjected to torture, that captives have the right to medical aid etc. Those rules were established after the World War II terrors and they incite us to act like better humans.

5. However, violence is unavoidable during war. The question is, at which moment does violence becomes crime. We do not have much information about what is going on in the zone of armed conflict and about the situation within rescued territory as well. But even those small notifications are frightening. There is unreasonable violence such as violence against unprotected people, violence between relatives just to demonstrate boldness or because of revenge. The scales are unknown, but this thing is expanding under circumstances, in which stress and lack of control are combined. If this last, such conditions will entail terrible events that could make a black stain in the new Ukrainian history.
6. Control. It is the lead but not only factor which determines who volunteers will become. Which institute is able to take discipline under control in battalions? How to do from different formations a force in a line-up with interior troops and army? How to obtain equal rules for everyone? These questions, unfortunately, remain open. There is only one thing which is possible to say certainly renewed military prosecution office is unable to do. It does not have an authority in the eyes of volunteers and desire to work objectively.
7. What will be done with the volunteers after war? This question is the most concerning. Everyone is waiting for the end of warfare. We should remember when a man goes on the war-torn ground, he will return different, otherwise life will remain as usual. It will become a serious psychological problem for some people and war will continue to them. Psychologists go to the eastern Ukraine's battlefields and help fighters to overcome posttraumatic disorder. Volunteer fighters may need social and aid programs not to feel useless.
8. What will be done with the volunteer battalions after war? Some of them can continue independent existence, doing life less peaceful. Most of the soldiers will take off their camouflage gear and will go back as heroes to families and work. Some battalions have already begun case of creating an independent force and this process will last. It can be formed in organized groups of fearless veterans who will thank the sponsors that supported them for a long time (the organization "Oplot", which made anti-Maidan statements, was formed this way from the ex-workers of the security forces). Politicians who generously sponsored equipment and supply for some battalions also will come to pick up debts and will use them as leverage for their own purposes. Finally, we can not ignore the criminal element, which is always present after the fighting when weapons appear in someone's hands.
9. The good news is that Ukraine exposed the most powerful potential of self-organization. It turned out that there is a great amount of people who do not want or expect the moment when someone will come to protect a motherland from the enemy. Now we do it by ourselves. The bad news is that a monopoly of the state on force, which exists in a stable country, can be destroyed. With the absence of control and unifying idea, weapons can

be used in political, economic, religious or personal conflicts. Therefore, we must remember that violence and instability will become stronger with these unsolved problems.

Finally, the actions of volunteer battalions are directly dependant on their patron, whose views and whims could differ greatly from Kiev's policy and the needs of the country. All the above stated points prove that the idea of private military units, especially in the 21st century is extremely dangerous. Due to the low level of political culture and not completely consolidated nation, it is even more dangerous in Ukraine. In our situation only the formation of a single, strong state army and its provision with everything that is needed can save the country from a fully-fledged war with Russia.

NOTES

1. Ukrainian army and volunteer battalions source <http://uacrisis.org/ukrainian-army-volunteer-battalions/>



2. Ukraine's volunteer battalions, including their base of operations source <https://medium.com/@Hromadske/ukraines-shadow-army-b04d7a683493>

Volunteer battalions involved in military action in Eastern Ukraine

In Ukraine today, 44 volunteer Territorial Defense Battalions (TDBs with the Ukrainian Armed Forces, UAF), 52 volunteer special purpose patrol battalions (SPPBs with the Interior Ministry, MIA), 3 volunteer special purpose National Guard battalions (SPNBGs), and several battalions under the Volunteer Ukrainian Corps (VUCs) have been established or are in the process of being organized

							
Dnipro	Named after Kuchukiy	Aidar	Crysis	Kyivka Red	Donoprotivik	Donop-2	Kyivka Red
Full name: Dnipro SPPB	General Kuchukiy SPPB	Aidar 24th TDB IAP	Krysis 40th TDB IAP	Kyivka Red 25th TDB IAP	Donoprotivik 20th IAP	Donop-2 19th IAP	Kyivka Red 12th IAP
SPPB acronym: National Guard	National Guard	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Defense	Ministry of Defense
official number: 432	432	421	421	421	421	421	421
actual members: +800	+125	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100
operational: 1st June 2014	1 April/August 2014	May 2014	May 2014	11 April 2014	Donoprotivik Battalion	May 2014	Donoprotivik Battalion
base of operations: Lviv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Luhansk Oblast	Luhansk Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Kyiv Oblast
							
ASOB	AMNO	KIMB	K2	UKRAINA	APTRIMIR	TEPAIRA	UKRAINA
Apex SPPB MIA	Donop-1 SPPB MIA	Kyiv-1 SPPB MIA	Kyiv-2 SPPB MIA	Zoloti Vozna	Artemivka	Shakhtarsk	Sich
MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA
official number: 430	430	430	430	430	430	430	430
actual members: +100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100
operational: 1st June 2014	14 April 2014	April 2014	April 2014	April 2014	1 May 2014	18 June 2014	June 2014
base of operations: Kyiv Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Kyiv Oblast
							
Luhansk-1	Scherkva	Leiv	Mykhailivka	Shturm	Ivano-Frankivka	Kharson	Poltava
Luhansk-1 SPPB MIA	Scherkva SPPB MIA	Leiv SPPB MIA	Mykhailivka SPPB MIA	Shturm SPPB MIA	Ivano-Frankivka SPPB MIA	Kharson SPPB MIA	Poltava SPPB MIA
MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA
official number: 200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
actual members: +100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100
operational: 1st June 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	9 May 2014	9 May 2014	18 May 2014	18 May 2014	18 April 2014
base of operations: Luhansk Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast	Luhansk Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast	Luhansk Oblast	Kharson Oblast	Donoprotivik Oblast
							
Slobozhanska	Kharkiv-1	Selyar	Kirovograd	Svaty Mykhail	Vinnytsya	Ivano-Frankivka	Chernivtsi
Slobozhanska SPPB MIA	Kharkiv-1 SPPB MIA	Selyar SPPB MIA	Kirovograd SPPB MIA	Svaty Mykhail SPPB MIA	Vinnytsya SPPB MIA	Ivano-Frankivka SPPB MIA	Chernivtsi SPPB MIA
MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA	MIA
official number: 300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300
actual members: +100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100	+100
operational: 1st June 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014	8 May 2014
base of operations: Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast	Kharkiv Oblast
							
Boychak Company	Krametschuk Company	DLN	Right Sector	Right Sector			
Boychak SPPB MIA	Krametschuk SPPB MIA		Right Sector SPPB MIA	Right Sector SPPB MIA			
MIA	MIA		MIA	MIA			
official number: 100	100		100	100			
actual members: 100	100		100	100			
operational: 1st June 2014	1st June 2014		1st June 2014	1st June 2014			
base of operations: Kyiv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast		Kyiv Oblast	Kyiv Oblast			

3. Azov battalion fighters take a public oath in Kyiv source <http://www.vox.com/2015/2/20/8072643/ukraine-volunteer-battalion-danger>



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