

Bandera is a hero, nationalism is a state ideology

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Recently, the nationalist trend, which has somewhat subsided in Ukraine, is beginning to gain new momentum.

Now Stepan Bandera's birthday has become a state holiday, and the participants of the nationalist organization of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN-UIA), are equal in status to the combatants and have similar privileges. The relevant law was signed by the President of the country Petro Poroshenko. By signing the decree, the president added to the list of participants in hostilities, defined by the law „On the status of war veterans, guarantees of their social protection”.

Participants in hostilities in Ukraine have the right to use about 20 benefits. They are granted benefits for utilities and public transport, as well as medical care and provision of medicines.

The adoption of this law threatens Ukraine with the possibility of litigation in international courts on behalf of victims of nationalists. After all, by equating the nationalists with the participants in the hostilities, the country officially recognizes the responsibility for the war crimes committed by their ancestors. And such crimes are known to have no statute of limitations.

At the same time, the greatest claims arise most likely from Poland. Indeed, during the Second World War, Warsaw was the main enemy for OUN members. The members of its military wing, the UIA, massacred primarily Polish citizens.

The OUN leader himself, Stepan Bandera, is considered by the Kiev authorities as „the leading figure and theorist of the Ukrainian national liberation movement“. President Yushchenko even provided him with the title of Hero of Ukraine posthumously with the wording „for the invincibility of the spirit in defending the national idea“.

Traditionally, Bandera along with Shukhevich were considered as heroes in Western Ukraine. Now, to popularize them in society, a different interpretation of their activities was invented. The leaders of the anti-Polish and anti-Russian movements are proposed to be regarded as... fighters against Russia. Now Bandera is presented in this perspective. Thus, the ideology of the glorification of Bandera is used by the authorities to rally the political electorate. And the nationalists celebrate – „Glory to Ukraine! – Glory to the heroes!“ already officially accepted in the army, which is one of the foundations of society.

Unfortunately, the situation leads to the fact that radical nationalists are already forming the way of the Ukrainian policy. In the absence of others, aggressive nationalism acquires the features of official ideology with the silent consent of society.

Authorship: Vitaliy Timoschuk

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