

Dangerous Crossroads: Presence of Foreign Mercenaries in Eastern Ukraine.

The Kiev government is Losing its Legitimacy

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The Kiev government is having trouble holding power even in western Ukraine, where it should have firm control. Meanwhile it's bringing in mercenaries to retake eastern areas, anti-war activist Daniel Patrick Welch told RT.

RT: With those latest events in Lvov, could it be that the interim government is losing support there?

Daniel Patrick Welch: I think the junta [in Kiev] is holding on to power very tentatively, although the people who took over the Lvov prosecutor's office seem to be fascists as well, that's what people in Kharkov and Donetsk are telling me. They see it more as an inter-fascist squabble. But the important thing that you can see from it is that they are having trouble holding power even in the West where they should have firm control.

RT: The protesters in Kiev were calling the former government corrupt. But now we see the new authorities appointing officials with questionable reputations. Why are they making such moves?

DW: They are simply trying to hold power. And I think they are losing legitimacy at an alarming rate for them. The point of Maidan was against corruption but it also had the element of a foreign intervention, as we know from Victoria Nuland's involvement in the famous EU phone call. So what's happening in the east is significantly different from that.



Participants attend the rally staged by supporters of the referendum on Donetsk Region's status in Donetsk. (RIA Novosti / Irina Gorbaseva)

RT: Let's take a look at Eastern Ukraine now... The authorities have called the recent crackdown on anti-Kiev activists in Kharkov an 'anti-terrorist' operation. What does that harsh rhetoric mean?

DW: They always use 'terrorists' when they want to demonize the people. These are either Ukrainians who do not like to be ruled by fascists from Kiev and they are rising up because they are awake and they see who their enemy is, and they are not going to back down. The use of the word [terrorist] is always a political trick.



Participants in a rally at the Donetsk regional state administration. (RIA Novosti)

RT: *When the protesters in Kiev were occupying government buildings there, they were praised as champions of democracy. But when the same happens in the East and South of the country dozens end up arrested and facing jail terms. Why such a distinction?*

DW: What we are seeing is the immense hypocrisy involved not just from the Kiev coup [government], but from the West in general. There have been no denunciations of the violence which took place last night and which is probably taking place right now in Donetsk as we speak. People inside the administration building waiting for storm and they have barricaded themselves in. They really are heroes of democracy, they are standing up for their rights and their own people, and they are being defended by their own people. The fact that you bring in people from outside, including possibly the foreign mercenaries, shows that you are not even confident of your own position let alone trying to retake control of these areas.

RT: *So what did Maidan achieve, with so many people voicing their discontent across the country?*

DW: It's hard to see now, isn't it? The point of it was to establish a NATO beachhead in Ukraine. And I don't think obviously that this is a catastrophic failure for the West and I see it as further unraveling. I think it's a massive historic mistake on a part of the US meddling, and NATO, and there will be repercussions for years to come.

RT: *Russia says it has evidence that US private security firm contractors are operating in Ukraine. What could that involvement mean?*

DW: I think it's definitely true. I'm getting reports of 300 mercenaries from Greystone Ltd. in Donetsk and 100 in Lugansk. It's extremely significant and dangerous development and it shows that the provocation is from the West, that Lavrov and the others have said "*Russia is not the one who destabilizes Ukraine,*" they are essentially correct. I think it will backfire. When you have to have foreign mercenaries to do dirty work, you are not a legitimate government.

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