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## On two fronts

Vladimir Platonenko

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The Russian and Belarusian partisans who burn military recruiting offices and wage a “rail war” are not only fighting the Russian-Belarusian authorities, but also the Ukrainian ones. This is especially true of the Russian partisans.

To make it easier to rule “their” people, any power, among other things, tries to turn them against “others”. So that “their” people do not unite with alien people in the struggle for common interests, which for both their own and alien authorities is a sharp knife. The principle: “divide and rule” has been known since the times of Ancient Rome, and probably appeared much earlier.

The Ukrainian government is no exception. Since the first days of the war, the Ukrainian authorities have been trying to convince the citizens of Ukraine that all Russian citizens without exception are at war against them, that any holder of a Russian passport is guilty before any holder of a Ukrainian passport for the simple fact that he has not yet killed Putin or been killed himself (or, at worst, captured and jailed) while trying to kill him. The argument is often made that Russians work in military factories and railways on which military trains travel, raise bread and cattle to feed soldiers or those who work in military factories and railways on which

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trains travel, in hospitals where soldiers are treated (or those who raise bread to feed those who work on the railways on which trains travel) – and so on; at the very least, that they are being taxed for this war. The Belarusians are often accused of the same, though less frequently. According to this logic, the one who is in occupied territory, working at enterprises occupied by the occupier, or even simply giving the occupier his mobile phone (not of his own free will, of course, but do Russians pay taxes of their own free will? Whether it does or not will depend not on the democracy of the authorities, but on what seems more expedient to them. From the point of view of the Ukrainian authorities, it is not expedient to declare their own citizens who have fallen under Russian rule “traitors of the motherland”. However, it is expedient to declare all Russian citizens as enemies indiscriminately. Others refer to official data on the almost total support of Russians for the war. Or at the very least, about the absence of resistance.

The best remedy against this propaganda is to refute it directly. Therefore any Russian partisan who sets fire to a military enlistment office or military unit or unscrews rails in front of a military train is detrimental not only to the Russian military machine, but also to the official Ukrainian propaganda. The same applies to Belarusians, who are also often accused of complicity with Putin and Lukashenko, although less often than Russians. Partisans thus help both their own people by preventing them from taking collective responsibility, and the Ukrainian people by protecting them from state propaganda that deceives and distracts from the social struggle.

It is true that to strike propaganda (both Ukrainian and Russian, trying to convince everyone of Putin’s nationwide support) it is not enough to set fire to or sabotage it, you must also make it public, spread the word about it. Therefore, the one who aids such dissemination also takes part in this struggle. And the one who hides the information about these actions avoids participation. It depends on

each individual case whether he does it by mistake, out of fear or out of sympathy for the authorities and not the people.