

## WHO AND WHY ATTACKS THE FPU?

Destructive forces have launched a campaign against the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine. Numerous trade union associations of Ukraine are being accused without reasons allegedly 'in collaboration with the criminal regime of Yanukovich', 'in sabotaging trade union rights', and even 'in support of the referendum's results in Donetsk.'

Also we should expect to see new insinuations, because now, in the midst of the conflict with Russia, it is convenient to deal with opponents accusing them of being at least unpatriotic, spreading rumors, distorting facts or giving them a far-fetched value.

It is regular on the eve of elections in the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine. As you know, a new FPU President will be elected on 26 June. In this regard, there are new attempts to put the FPU under control of 'their man.' And if possible, to remove the leadership, as early elections to the Verkhovna Rada are not far off, and there is a huge temptation to use considerable resource of trade unions.

It should be recalled that, in 2005, the FPU passed a test for compliance with international standards of democracy and autonomy, and became an affiliate of the International Trade Union Confederation which operates in more than 160 countries and represents international trade union movement in international organisations. The FPU was the first among civil society organisations to officially proclaim policy of integration into the European trade union movement and Eurozone. This decision was taken in 2006 by the 5<sup>th</sup> FPU Congress and further regularly confirmed.

The FPU supported the EU Eastern Partnership policy while warning of threats posed to workers of Ukraine by export of policy of neoliberalism, and encouraged of the European social model development in our country.

Essentially protecting trade union rights, which are an integral part of human rights, the FPU is among the national trade union centers that obtained a consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council.

Protecting workers' rights the FPU more than once submitted complaints to the International Labour Organization demanding to pay wages timely and fully, to stop violations of a number of fundamental ILO conventions by public authorities and illegal use of child labour in Ukraine. On the FPU's demand several Ukrainian governments had to explain to the Committee on Standards of the International Labour Conference, which is called the ILO's conscience, why Ukraine was violating its international commitments. It definitely helped to improve legislation and situation. However, it should be also recognised that

Ukrainian legislation does not fully meet even the ILO conventions on labour and social guarantees ratified by Ukraine.

And there is also fault of the legislative authority. It was the Verkhovna Rada who failed to ratify, despite demands of trade unions, the whole European Social Charter, in particular, such important provisions as Article 1 'The right to work', Article 12 'The right to social security' and Article 13 'The right to social and medical assistance'.

We would like to urge the Members of Parliament to accelerate approximation of national legislation to European one, to implement European international standards in the field of social protection in law practice in Ukraine.

Now someone has been trying to involve the whole Ukrainian Parliament in a raider attack on trade unions. Deliberately unlawful, with flimsy accusations, the draft Resolution of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine 'On creation of temporary committee of inquiry in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in order to investigate facts of illegal alienation of immovable property that is in use of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine' recently submitted by the Member of Parliament of Ukraine S. Kaplin (faction of the Udar Party) cannot arouse anything but righteous indignation.

At the same time, we would like to remind that not laws, but Resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine No. 2268 of 10/04/1992 and No. 3943 of 04/02/1994 questioned property belonging to public organisations despite the state acts of property rights, that allowed the prosecutor's office, courts and the State Property Fund to make illegal actions to seize property from trade unions.

The FPU, uniting nearly 7.5 million workers, students, and veterans of labour, is a rightful owner of all sanatoria and health resorts. It is officially confirmed by relevant government regulations and court decisions, and protected by Articles 13, 41, 92 of the Constitution of Ukraine.

Our allies and voters remember well that it was the current Verkhovna Rada who adopted the corrupt Law of 16 June 2014 'On Public Procurement' and still refuses to bring it into line with the EU legislation, that it was the Verkhovna Rada who failed to pass laws that would stop outflow of billions of dollars of income hard earned by Ukrainians to offshore zones.

It is the Verkhovna Rada who has been failed to adopt a new Labour Code for 15 years, protecting interests of large businesses, who approved the former Prosecutor General of Ukraine, and heads of law enforcement agencies on whose orders all the FPU's leaders and staff were forced to come to endless questionings by investigators during the events on Maidan, and the latter tried to intimidate them by criminal liability for providing shelter for protestors.

Finally, it was the Verkhovna Rada, its former majority who legalised the constitutional coup in Ukraine giving through the Constitutional Court unlimited powers to the former President of Ukraine, and then unconditionally fulfilled his will.

Today, someone wants to finish what the previous regime failed to do: to break the last outpost of social and economic protection of workers in Ukraine in these difficult times for the country and society, the times of deep economic and structural crisis and offensive of global capital on social rights.

We would like to ask the author of the draft Resolution why he would not find out what happened to public health resorts, in particular belonging to the Ministry of Health of Ukraine? If you would like to inspect, then inspect everything, otherwise we would consider the draft Regulation as another attempt to deprive workers and trade union members of their last property.

To refute speculation and rumors, the FPU Presidium confirms that the trade unions:

- were and will be defending legal labour and social and economic rights of workers;
- promote development of anthropocentric European social model in Ukraine;
- stand for one and united Ukraine, will never recognise annexation of the Crimea, and condemn any attempts to split the country;
- believe that all issues in the country should be resolved primarily through dialogue taking into account of citizens' interests as much as possible.

Everyone must respect the law, even the highest officials. The trade union health resorts have been lawfully established for decades by generations of workers at their own expense, and hundreds of thousands of people have still been treating and improving their health there.

Trade unions will not allow 'new raiders' who, under the guise of democratic transformation in the worst traditions of the nineties, have been encroaching again on the property of trade union members, since public one had long been pilfered by predecessors, sometimes, with direct participation of the current ones interested to 'restore order in trade unions'.

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