

NO EXPLOITATION OF DR. MLK JR. TO SUPPORT WAR CRIMINAL PUTIN

ANSWER, The People's Forum, and Code Pink try to brand themselves as “leftists,” yet they parrot Putin’s talking point about NATO in a stylish graphic stating “Honor the Anti-War legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.” (right)

Putin, a racist, misogynist, capitalist, neo-Tsarist authoritarian with elements of fascism, launched the Russian invasion—with ongoing murder, rape and torture of Ukrainians, destruction of essential civilian infrastructure, and threats to global food security—by saying, “Further expansion of the NATO infrastructure and the beginning of military development in Ukraine’s territories are unacceptable for us actually.” (1)

ANSWER’s “Peace in Ukraine” webpage is filled with lies, including the well-known whopper that “US/NATO” are responsible for genocide in Ukraine, not Putin and the Russian army. This is a popular talking point of Russia (perpetrator), not Ukraine (victim), shared by the UNAC website that also promotes a “MLK Week of Action” under the slogan “Stop Washington’s War Moves Against Russia.” UNAC then erases an 11-year national liberation struggle in Syria against Assad, backed with Putin’s weapons, by equating it to the Iraq War.

No principled activist should work with these groups. They weaponize racial identity and anti-war activism as cover for their pro-Russia propaganda—the same state that detained Brittney Griner and has Wagner Group mercenaries committing atrocities in Mali, Central African Republic, and Libya One can be confident of what Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. would say about having his image exploited by Putin propagandists: **“I have unequivocally declared my hatred for this most colossal of all evils [war] and I have condemned any organizer of war, regardless of his rank or nationality.”** (2)

Left activists in Ukraine when discussing negotiations don’t simplistically demand “Peace in Ukraine.” They, following Rev. Dr. MLK Jr., have clear, justice-focused demands. These include public (not closed-door) negotiations (demanded by Zelensky and largely endorsed by the Ukrainian left), international accountability for war crimes, full troop withdrawal, and reversal of all annexations of Ukrainian territory. Putin propagandists, like ANSWER, UNAC, Code Pink and The People's Forum, on the other hand, **attempt to absolve Russia of blame.** “Russian disinformation campaigns are persistent, pervasive, and very creative.” (3) Using Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. 's image with “Peace in Ukraine” is a facile positioning designed to de-center the terms “justice” and “accountability.”

STATEMENT CO-SPONSORS:

- UKRAINE
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Citations:

- (1) <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/24/putins-speech-declaring-war-on-ukraine-translated-excerpts>
- (2) from "The Social Organization of Nonviolence" by Rev. Dr. MLK Jr.
- (3) hyperallergic.com/733286/art-writers-must-stop-parroting-putin-talking-points-about-nato/

UKRAINE SOCIALIST
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HONORS THE
PRINCIPLED RADICAL
POLITICS & ENDURING
LEGACY OF
REV. DR.
MARTIN LUTHER KING
JR.

**True peace is not
merely the absence
of tension; it is the
presence of justice**

—

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Stride Toward Freedom, 1958

HONOR
DR KING'S
LEGACY

NO JUSTICE
NO PEACE

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