

IN SUB-ZERO CONDITIONS THE BATTLE GOES ON

by our Eastern European Affairs correspondent

LAST WEEK people throughout Western Europe celebrated in the festive spirit traditionally reserved for Christmas and the New Year. But it was business as usual in Ukraine as Russian and Ukrainian troops fight in sub-zero temperatures on the front that runs from the Black Sea to the Russian border. There was no holiday break for the Ukrainian batteries who relentlessly pound residential areas in the cities of Donbas whilst Russian missiles and drones roared over Ukraine in a renewed drive to cut the Ukrainians' power lines and water supplies.

The Russians still have overwhelming air-superiority but the Ukrainians have been hitting back with new drones and missiles supplied by their NATO masters. Last week they launched a raid on a makeshift Russian barracks in the Donbas. They say that at least 400 Russians were killed and another 300 wounded – most, if not all, reservists called up in the recent mobilisation. The Russians say less than a hundred died in the attack but they have not released the numbers of those wounded in what the Moscow

media concedes was a devastating attack.

At least 89 servicemen were killed when Ukrainian missiles hit their temporary barracks in Makeyevka in the Donetsk People's Republic on Sunday. The building, a vocational college, was targeted by six missiles from an American-supplied HIMARS multiple rocket launcher, four of which penetrated the Russian air defences and hit the building at precisely 0:01am on New Year's Day. The Ukrainian launcher was later destroyed in a retaliatory strike.

Whilst the Russian army has opened an investigation into the raid, it is "already obvious that the main reason for what happened was the turning on and mass use of mobile phones by personnel – contrary to the ban – within the range of enemy weapons" that allowed Ukrainian forces to trace their coordinates, General Sergey Sevryukov told reporters this week.

This, however, is being questioned in the Russian nationalist camp. They ask why were hundreds of troops



• Aid from Russia continues to flow into the Donbas.

all stationed in one building in a village that is constantly shelled by Ukrainian artillery. They want to know why the troops were sent to an unfortified school-house when numerous strong buildings with basements were nearby. Some say this is a blatant case of criminal incompetence. Others say it smells of treason.

Meanwhile on the home front Russian communists are stepping up their efforts to deliver humanitarian aid to the Donbas. This week communists from Siberia are spending three days behind the wheel driving from Novosibirsk to Lugansk to deliver food and medical supplies to the people of the Donbas.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) has so far sent 104 convoys to the Donbas people's republics, which joined the Russian Federation in September 2022.

And the donations are not just from communists. Ordinary citizens have joined in the effort transferring funds and bringing much-needed equipment, medicines and clothes for the convoy that will reach Lugansk this week.

"We are patriots of our country, and when our guys fight there, we are simply obliged to provide them with all possible assistance," says one of the drivers, Novosibirsk communist Pyotr Rybakov.

FUND

Well the festive season has ended with the December fighting fund appeal closing at £3,200 thanks to a Carlisle friend who sent in £50 in memory of Andrew Harvey and another £50 from a regular Essex supporter of our efforts, £700 from an East Anglian comrade, £100 from a comrade in Southall and a tenner from a Korean solidarity activist in London. Though £300 short of our target we live to fight another day so let's get back on the street and step up the work to build the *New Worker*.

The January appeal starts now and all donations, big or small, will count in the fight to guarantee the survival of the only communist weekly in the country. Please send your donations to: *New Worker* Fund, PO Box 73, London SW11 2PQ. Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to the '*New Worker*'.

To save a stamp you can also use your credit or debit card to send contributions here:
<http://newworker.org/ncpcentral/fightingfund.html>

INSIDE
America First
means
everyone else
last...p2
The Amazon
jungle...p3