



Militarism and the Left

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Militarism and War

- **World faces two existential threats emerging out of the generalised crisis of capitalism:**
 - Climate Change
 - Threat of World (nuclear) War
- Series of military conflicts that could spread over into open war between major powers: Palestine, Ukraine, South China Sea.
- Rise in militarism and military expenditures,
- What is role of left - more precisely of the European left?

Capitalism and Militarisation

- **Militarisation serves a number of purposes:**
 - Maintain and extend imperialism and interests of capital.
 - Raise profits of military companies.
 - Provide source of external demand through state expenditures (Military Keynesianism)
 - Militarisation of society.



Rising Military Expenditures

- In 2022, the total global military expenditure reached an all-time high of approximately \$2.24 trillion, 1.75trillion a decade earlier.
- USA has around 40% of global military expenditures. - around 3x larger than China's and 12x Russia's.
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen H. Hicks (NATO SUMMIT):
- "U.S. investments in defense R&D-plus-procurement over the first term of the Biden-Harris Administration — totalling \$1.27 trillion — is the highest amount that DoD has invested in these areas across any four-year period throughout the entirety of the Cold War,"
- EU military expenditures in 2023 = \$271bln, up from \$247bln a year ago.

No Guns and Butter

- Diversion of government resources to military will reduce money for social and ecological issues.
- E.g. New UK Labour government has announced that there is no money for new social spending (e.g expanding child benefits) but said that UK defense spending will rise to 2.5% of GDP and 3bln pounds of military aid annually to Ukraine.



Rising Profits



Weapons industry's share prices is up 25% over the past year



European arms and aerospace stock index is up by over 50% over the same period.



Israel Aerospace Industries sees best year in arms sales amid war in Ukraine and in Gaza with profit up 49%.

Poland

Poland spent around 4 percent of its GDP on the military in 2023.

By 2035, the Polish government plans to spend around EU127bln on modernising its armed forces, equal to around 20 percent of its current GDP.

The government plans to double the size of the Polish army to around 300,000 soldiers by 2035, which will include about 50,000 territorial soldiers.

This will make the Polish army one of the largest in Europe, dwarfing for example the German army that is made up of around 185,000 soldiers.

Limits of Military Keynesianism

- Produce products that have no use to economy and society.
- Also, weapons are often not produced in countries that purchase them.
- Only around 20 percent of all military equipment that Poland is currently buying is produced in Poland,
- The vast majority of all orders realised in the USA and South Korea.
- Poland has emerged as one of the leading buyers of military equipment from the USA, with these equalling around USD31bln in 2022-23.

Polish Foreign Minister, Radosław Sikorski:

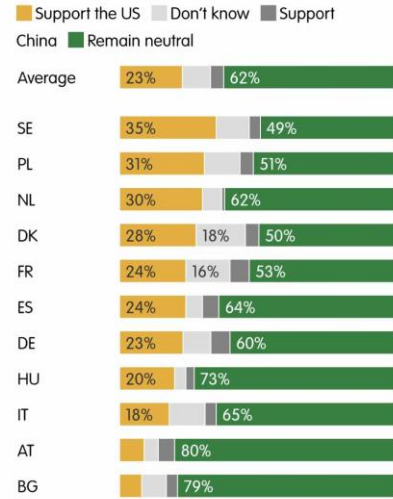
- **“most of this money is spent here in the United States. According to some analyses up to 90 percent goes directly to create American jobs on American soil. ,,, “117 production lines in at least 31 states and 71 cities where Americans are producing major weapons systems for Ukraine.” You can find them in deeply blue states like California, deeply red states like Mississippi, and purple states like Pennsylvania or Ohio, where Abrams tanks are made, which Poland, for example, is also buying. Much of the newly made equipment ends up not in Ukraine but in the hands of American soldiers. It replaces stockpiles of older weaponry already sent to help defeat Putin’s invasion.** American investment in Ukraine’s capacity to defend itself is a literal proof that “by helping others you help yourself.” Helping Ukraine is not only a good deed. It’s also a good deal.”

Militarism and Borders



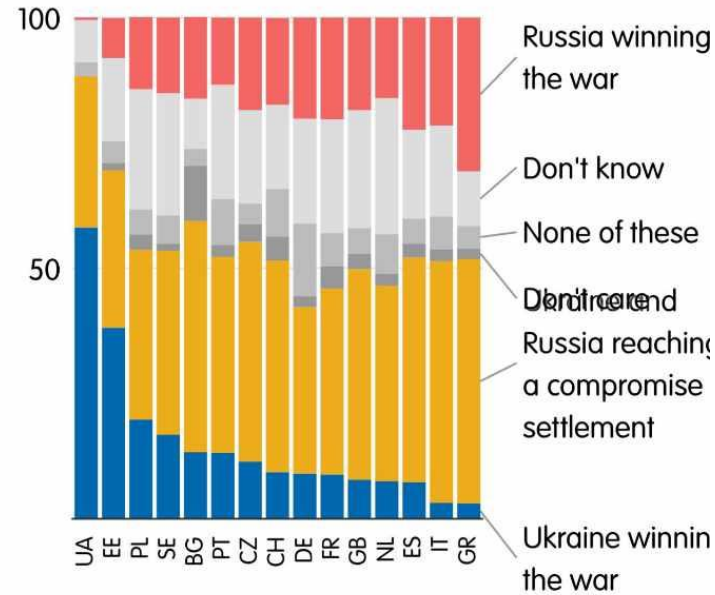
- **Increased militarisation of borders as conflicts grow**
- The Ministry of Defence has prepared statutory amendments to facilitate the use of weapons by officers guarding the borders between Poland and Belarus
- Authorities have new means of their disposal: gas throwers, incapacitating nets, also smoothbore weapons.
- Pushbacks used now regularly.
- Investment border infrastructure could cost PLN 1.8 billion
- Tusk regularly visited border during Euro elections. Right-wing parties in Poland competing over who is most anti-immigrant.

Europeans' views on how their country should respond to a potential conflict between the US and China over Taiwan

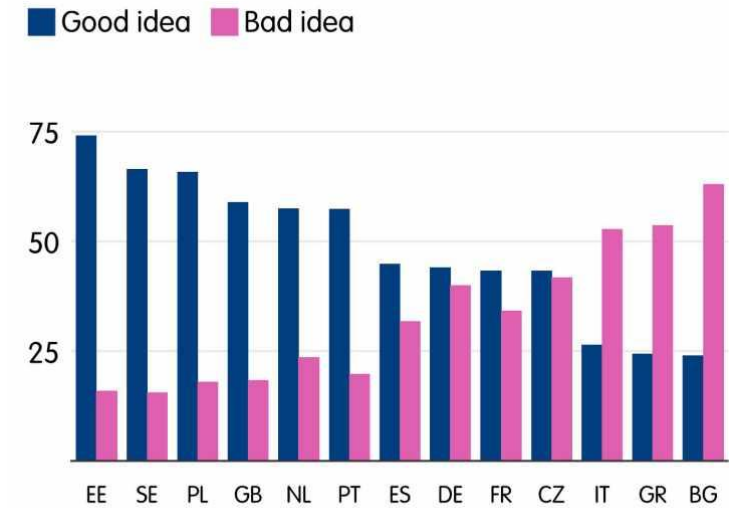


Responses to the following question: imagine China were to invade Taiwan and the United States came to its defence and joined the war. What would you like your country to do? a) I would like it to take America's side; b) Don't know; c) I would like it to take China's side; d) I would like it to remain neutral.
ECFR - ecfre.eu

What is the most likely outcome of the war? In per cent.



Is it a good idea to increase ammunition and weapons supplies to Ukraine from its allies? In per cent.



Militarism and European Economy and Society

There is no left flank of Militarism

- Left has to return to its historical role of promoting for peace
- Need peace deal and negotiation.
- Militarism serves the far-right: they are the most natural political force for this: authoritarian, militaristic, etc.
- Far-right will succumb to militarism and war when in power
- USA will try increasingly to push burden of military onto Europe: Trump is most extreme example of this
- Leading to further impoverishing Europe: deindustrialisation and militarisation.

