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Ukraine

For Ukraine without oligarchs and occupiers!

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The predatory policies of the newly elected U.S. president make it impossible to establish a lasting peace for Ukrainians. Ukraine's refusal to sign the mineral extraction agreement, designed to serve the interests of American capital, demonstrates the country's determination to avoid colonial dependence. This opens the door to exploring a more equitable model of relations between Ukraine and the states of Europe, Asia, and the rest of the world under the banner of resistance to imperialist domination. However, if the current approach persists, Ukraine risks facing an imminent reduction or even a complete halt of military aid from the United States.

This aid has never been either timely or sufficient. However, its termination would be deeply felt.

If the Ukrainian state is determined to sustain the military effort until the liberation of its territories or the decisive defeat of the aggressor, it must adopt the appropriate methods. In our view, Ukraine's defence could be strengthened by transitioning to a policy of "war socialism", which would involve mobilising sufficient capital to serve the state through confiscation and abandoning market-based economic regulation. Such a policy, combined with wealth redistribution, would reduce the burden of war that falls disproportionately on the poorest segments of Ukrainian society.

The European community has already responded to Trump's statements by expanding defence budgets and increasing military aid to Ukraine. It is worth noting that since the full-scale invasion, the government has taken significant steps to strengthen our own defence capabilities, localise Western production, revive missile programs, and scale up own drone program. However, Ukraine still has substantial potential to mobilise internal resources.

Social Movement (Sotsialnyi Rukh) has long emphasised the necessity of these measures, but now they are critical to Ukraine's ability to defend itself. The main obstacle to effectively mobilising resources is the neoliberal policy, which prioritises private property above all else, encourages profiteering, and allows wealth to be accumulated by private individuals. As long as Ukrainian cities remain occupied and the Russian aggressor retains offensive capabilities, all sectors of the economy must function in a coordinated manner, maximising their contribution to the defence effort.

Most financial resources should be concentrated in the hands of the state and invested in the defence sector, while private capital must be subject to progressive taxation to replenish the state budget. Strengthening defence is inseparable from large-scale investment in the social sphere: creating jobs (especially in critical infrastructure sectors), improving the care sector to enable more women to enter the workforce, and increasing access to the social services such as healthcare, temporary housing, and rehabilitation. These measures could also help attract citizens back from abroad.

Additionally, it is essential to improve social guarantees for the military service members, especially those defending Ukraine since 2022.

The uniqueness of Ukraine's situation lies in the fact that the dismantling of oligarchic capitalism has become more possible than ever in the context of full-scale war and is justified by society. Firstly, a significant portion of essential public services, which determine Ukraine's resilience, are already provided by state-owned enterprises (railways, postal services, healthcare, education, banks). Secondly, numerous enterprises (primarily those connected to Russian oligarchs) have been nationalised, and the share of GDP redistributed through the budget has increased. Thirdly, Ukrainian oligarchs have already lost part of their wealth and levers of control, increasingly submitting to the

influence of state power.

- Audit of natural resources and land to determine their owners and the public benefits derived from their use. Transparency in the control of national wealth is not needed for hasty trading of these resources, but to understand the foundation on which the growth of general prosperity is possible. This will motivate the people to fight more effectively for their homeland and its social prospects.
- Establishing state control over enterprises in strategic sectors of the economy and setting up mass production for the needs of those at the front-line. Industry must operate in the interests of defence, not chase after volatile market trends. Returning critical infrastructure objects to state ownership. Access to basic goods should not become a feeding trough for oligarchs or a means of siphoning state benefits into the pockets of monopolists. Keeping DTEK in the hands of Rinat Akhmetov or regional energy companies in the hands of Vadym Novynskyi is an unjustified act of state charity in favour of oligarchs.
- Revising the results of the plundering privatisation. Enterprises bought for a pittance should be returned to the state, or the difference between the purchase price and the actual market value should be compensated. First and foremost, under state control should be enterprises in the mining, machine-building, and chemical industries that are critical for ensuring defence. Enough scraping money from donations – let the oligarchs pay.
- Denouncing any agreements on double taxation avoidance with Cyprus, the Virgin Islands, and other offshore jurisdictions. The added value created using Ukrainian natural resources, infrastructure, and labour should be taxed here and only here.
- Introducing progressive taxation and a luxury tax. The defence of the country relies on the heroism and sacrifices of Ukrainian peasants, workers, and small business. To preserve the country, the wealthiest must sacrifice their fortunes, in proportion to the influence they had before the war – the top tax rate should reach 90% of income. Without fiscal activism, Ukraine will fall into an insurmountable debt trap (by 2025, the external debt may approach 100% of GDP).
- Establishing worker control in enterprises as an effective tool for internal auditing and a form of self-organised society. From the first days of the war to the present, the country has been accompanied by corruption scandals related to the misuse of funds. Continuous control by trade unions and workers' councils is the key to greater transparency in leadership actions and preventing corruption. It may be possible to bribe individual people, but it is impossible to bribe an entire collective. Granting effective control powers to trade unions will serve as an incentive for the development of a genuine labour movement.
- Abandoning the previous practice of underfunding education and science. The high technological nature of modern warfare makes the role of engineers and skilled workers just as important as that of soldiers. It is only the educational inertia of the previous era, combined with the widespread technical literacy of the Ukrainian population, that has made possible the design, production, and mastery of numerous modern technical tools that give us an advantage on the battlefield. We can no longer rely on the inertia of past eras. Significant investments in education and science were needed yesterday. Without the development of the social sector, Ukraine faces mass emigration and a demographic crisis that will prevent replenishing human losses.
- State monopoly on exports. In 2024, the export of agricultural products reached a record \$24.5 billion, although the profits continue to line private pockets.
- Resetting relations with Europe regarding the fate of Russian assets. Cleansing itself of the remnants of oligarchic influence, Ukraine will heal from corruption, making it possible to have a substantive discussion about transferring frozen Russian assets for Ukrainian needs. Currently, approximately \$200 billion of the \$300 billions of Russian-origin assets are held in European countries.

- Raising the social prestige of the military personnel. The replenishment of the state budget will allow for the payment of fair financial compensation to wounded soldiers who wish to return to service. It is essential to restore the practice of maintaining the average salary for mobilised workers, which will ensure the Armed Forces of Ukraine have the necessary personnel potential.

The implementation of these steps is impossible without a break between the country's leadership, big business, and its agents of influence. If even some of these measures are implemented, they will increase public trust in the government. True guarantees of Ukraine's security lie in strengthening internal societal ties. On the other hand, other countries will not help us until we demonstrate our willingness to prioritize defence interests over market interests. And in the 34th year of its independence, Ukraine will have to learn to live without oligarchs and capitalists. While Ukraine still has significant financial, industrial, and human resources, failing to move towards their socialisation would be a major mistake.

Now the Ukrainian government has a unique opportunity to show, in practice, what it is willing to sacrifice – the country or the oligarchs. If we put an end to the neoliberal chaos that deepens the gap between the rich and the poor, we will unite the people and become a unifying force of global stature! If we rebuild the economy on socially oriented principles, we will endure the struggle and lay a solid foundation for reconstruction!

Millions from the oligarchs – for welfare and defence! For Ukraine without oligarchs and occupiers!

March 3 2024

PS:

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