



Reverse cuts **and austerity.** **Support Ukraine.** **Tax the rich!**

As part of the labour movement, Ukraine Solidarity Campaign stands with the struggle against cuts and austerity, and to assert workers' interests against profit and inequality – in the UK, Ukraine, everywhere. Many of our affiliated trade union organisations are sponsoring this protest, including UNISON, PCS & UCU nationally.

That a Labour government is inflicting further misery on our class to protect the wealth and profits of the rich is a disgrace. The labour movement must hold them to account.

In Ukraine, as Russian soldiers, bombs and drones continue to inflict death and misery on a huge scale, with the war putting more and more strain on communities, families and services, it is the working class that is keeping the country going – but also that is shouldering the greatest sacrifice, as the devastation caused by the invasion is exacerbated by the Ukrainian government's neoliberal policies.

Ukraine's labour movement is appealing for solidarity against Zelensky's neoliberalism. It is also, even more urgently, appealing for solidarity with Ukraine's fight for survival. We must give both.

"Welfare not warfare" = stop aid to Ukraine?

A minority in the UK labour movement, including the leadership of the Stop the War Coalition, counterposes aid to Ukraine to funding UK public services. The majority of the movement rightly rejects this false and reactionary argument.

These are the facts: since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022, the UK has provided £13bn military aid to Ukraine (£2.3bn a loan), as against military spending of £160bn. Starmer's push for higher military spending is not about Ukraine. Nor are similar pushes by other European governments. Despite their rhetoric, these governments are very reticent about giving Ukraine the weapons it needs to push Russia back and

win sustainable peace. Instead they posture about peace-keeping troops in Ukraine after a deal likely giving Russia huge swathes of Ukrainian territory.

A fast, comprehensive defeat of the invasion by Ukraine could in fact contribute to minimising the likelihood of future wars and wider militarisation.

Tax the rich!

There is a huge amount of wealth in society – easily enough to rebuild public services and welfare, restore and increase foreign aid, support Ukraine, and much more. The problem is that wealth is increasingly concentrated in the wrong hands.

Echoing the idea there is a shortage of resources lets the government and the rich off the hook while strengthening the right. Instead the labour movement must campaign to take wealth from the rich to fund everything we need.

Reject British nationalism and chauvinism

The Stop the War Coalition also shades into arguing that money should be spent on public services at home in the UK, not spent abroad.

This is the same logic justifying Trump's assault on the US's foreign aid budget – shamefully copied by Starmer here. (Trump has also run down military aid for Ukraine, while maintaining aid for aggressive states including Israel, India and Pakistan.) Such toxic arguments will strengthen Farage and co., not the left.

Support Ukraine's anti-imperialist struggle

Ukraine is fighting against invasion, occupation and right-wing authoritarianism. That is true despite the neoliberal character of its government. It's why Ukraine's entire labour movement, while opposing Zelensky's policies, supports resistance to Russia.

We should not trust the Western powers. But we should no more oppose aid for the Ukrainian struggle than the left opposed Soviet and Chinese aid for the Vietnamese in the 60s and 70s, Indian aid for the Bangladeshis in 1971, and so on.

That is why more and more UK unions have come out strongly in support of Ukraine. That includes unions strongly critical of militarisation, higher military spending, etc – most recently NEU, voting to strongly back Ukraine at its conference in April.

Ukraine Solidarity Campaign *is the UK trade union and labour movement campaign organising political and practical solidarity with Ukraine and its workers' movement. Our national affiliates are UNISON, PCS, ASLEF, UCU, GMB & NUM. Affiliate, join, get involved. info@ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org / ukrainesolidaritycampaign.org / Facebook / Instagram / Bluesky / Twitter/X*