#SpeakOutAgainstWW3: Workers and youth in Germany oppose militarism and war

Our reporters
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Reporters from the *World Socialist Web Site* spoke with workers from the BMW motorcycle plant in Berlin Wednesday about an international perspective for the fight against the war in Ukraine. For the automobile manufacturer BMW, whose owning families enriched themselves massively in the course of the Nazi war of annihilation against the Soviet Union, around 2,100 employees produce up to 800 two-wheelers daily in Berlin.

As the WSWS reporters emphasized, the working class in Russia, Ukraine and around the world must be united against the war that only the capitalists benefit from. While the reactionary invasion of the Putin regime must be firmly opposed, the fight against the aggression of the imperialist NATO powers must be rejected and a nuclear war prevented at all costs.

This perspective met with great resonance among BMW workers. Many made statements to our reporters to support the unity of the working class. The unprecedented rearmament of the German military, whose annual budget will be tripled, was rejected by all. A *World Socialist Web Site* leaflet handed out by reporters addressed the background of the current war, which is systematically concealed by the bourgeois media.

Luke and Erik, who are in their apprenticeships, said, “Russian, Ukrainian and German workers must unite. They have the same interests. Nobody wants this war.”

Nizami added, “I like what you do. We are both from Afghanistan, so we know exactly what NATO is. Yugoslavia has also seen what such a war means.” Alexei commented, “I agree with you that the people of Russia and Ukraine must unite against this war. I myself am of ‘Soviet origin’ and therefore totally opposed to this war.”

Michael stated, “You're right. Nobody profits from this war, especially the working class.” And Hadi added, “I am absolutely against this war, as are all those I know. Meanwhile, I think everyone has understood that it is completely escalating. It didn't have to be like this. I am also against the German rearmament. Where will it lead? Nobody in Ukraine benefits from the rearmament in Germany.”

The opposition to nationalism and the aggression of the imperialist powers is widespread and deeply rooted in the German and European working class. In recent days, the *World Socialist Web Site* has received many more statements from workers, students and members of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), who spoke out against the war and shared their statements on social media.

Tom, a tram driver from Munich and national committee member of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP), said, “The threat of former President Gauck that we must now freeze for peace is absolutely serious. It is not far from here until we starve or even die for peace. Even if the media now downplays his statement, the only way out is for the working class—as in the October Revolution of 1917—to put an end to the war in Ukraine and to all other wars.”

Daniel, who lives and works in Dresden, declared, “The danger of a third world war is greater than ever. The war in Ukraine is increasingly out of control and its potential consequences are ultimately threatening all of humanity. From the outset, the conflict was fuelled by the US and the NATO powers, who are now using it as an excuse to massively upgrade and transfer war equipment to the Russian border.

“Germany has provided 100 billion euros for the Bundeswehr overnight and has decided to purchase F-35 stealth fighter jets. This marked the launch of the largest rearmament campaign since the Second World

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War.

"This danger can only be averted by a united and independent movement of the working class, that is to say the very greatest part of humanity. No one was asked or able to vote on whether Germany or another country should support the war. The ruling class acts on its own authority and is forced to defend its capitalist privileges and concentrated wealth by all means.

"I support the SGP and the ICFI because they are the only ones who resolutely oppose the threat of war. No one else represents the interests of the working population, which can no longer bear wars and simply wants to live in peace."

Laura, a student in Magdeburg, said, "It is outrageous that huge sums of money are being invested in armaments, especially amid the coronavirus. This shows exactly where the priorities of the capitalist class lie, namely not with the population and its protection against infection with COVID-19. The war is driving millions of people to flee, which will only promote the spread of the virus. The war-mongering currently taking place must not be underestimated. A further expansion of the war must be prevented, for it is always the workers who have to suffer most in wars."

Joshua, a student in Bavaria and IYSSE member, commented, "As a German student, I express my solidarity with the people of both Ukraine and Russia. The Russian attack on Ukraine is a result of Putin's deeply reactionary and nationalist policies, which represent a small, extremely rich oligarchy. But, contrary to what is propagated in the media, the invasion did not originate out of Putin's whim, but against the background of the imperialist expansion of NATO, which began thirty years ago and has since not shied away from any atrocity in order to increase its sphere of influence. The Ukrainian government, which is closely linked to the EU and NATO and is riddled with neo-Nazis, plays as reactionary a role as the Kremlin.

"The only way to stop the war and prevent a third world war is to have an independent and international union of workers, which will stop the war and fight the root of all wars, capitalism! For whoever speaks of war must not remain silent about capitalism!"

Florian, a student from Baden-Württemberg, said, "In a situation in which the coronavirus pandemic is raging and hundreds are losing their lives every day in Germany, the danger of a third world war is becoming ever greater. This war, which would probably be fought with nuclear weapons, would mean the destruction of all humanity.

"To prevent this catastrophe, the slogan must not be Russian, Ukrainian nationalism or even imperialism, but international socialism. Or to quote Marx: 'Proletarians of all countries unite.'"

Ela, a student in Munich, wrote, "If overnight there is €100 billion for rearmament, but the Minister of Finance talks about sticking to a 'balanced budget'—then everyone knows that the money for it will be squeezed out of the population. But since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, every penny has been too much to save lives. That is why it is important for workers to intervene independently in order to end the war in Ukraine and everywhere else in the world."

Tamino, a student and IYSSE member, stated, "The danger of a third world war is greater than ever. The Putin government's reactionary invasion must be condemned in every respect. But a world war cannot be prevented by supporting any nationalism or adapting to NATO imperialism. The German government in particular, with its €100 billion rearmament package – which was already planned in the coalition negotiations – and its massive arms deliveries, makes it clear that it is preparing for a direct military confrontation.

"As Trotsky explained, in the fight against war one must not be guided by the map of war, but by the principles of class struggle. Only an internationally united struggle of the workers in Ukraine, Russia, Germany and worldwide can prevent a third world war."

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