

## **Economic and legal principles of social protection of military personnel: World experience and Ukraine**

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**Abstract:** The article considers principles of military personnel' social protection in Ukraine, USA, Australia, and New Zealand in a comparative perspective. The framework used for the analysis is the dilemma of two opposing concepts of countries' development and security – 'warfare state' and 'welfare state'. The detrimental effect of skewing towards warfare state, manifested in skyrocketing growth of military field expenditures, is shown, backed up with an array of statistical data, scholars' publications and expert analytics. It is demonstrated that the arising and essence of this opposition is rooted in the growing trends of securitization throughout the world, and detrimental effects of over-securitization on the overall welfare of country are justified. It is emphasized that for Ukraine, these concerns are particularly important, especially in the current conditions of war and the need, on the one hand, to effectively protect the country from aggression and on the other hand, enable economic and social resilience.

**Keywords:** Budget, Military personnel, Securitization, Social protection, Warfare state, Welfare state.

### **1. Introduction**

As history shows, state ideology, especially in the area of military reforms, should proceed from the fact that the life of military personnel is a state value, their rights and freedoms are inviolable, and restrictions of individual rights and freedoms caused by the specifics of military service and risk should be compensated by real social protection, increasing the prestige of military service. This means that ensuring effective social protection of military personnel and their family members should be among the most important priorities of not only military but also administrative reforms. At the same time, one should not forget that the main priority for any country is the stable development of the welfare state. Stability of welfare state' development cannot be provided in the conditions of both opposing and convergence of welfare state and 'warfare state' (that is, unproportioned growth of military expenditures, including social protection of military personnel). The article attempts to demonstrate long-term disadvantage and even destructiveness of the policy of over-securitization, manifested in building the economic and legal principles of military personnel social protection and benefits on the

macroeconomic doctrine of warfare state, at the expense of cutting other, non-military, spheres of social expenditures.

## 2. Literature Review

Warfare history may be broadly classified into two academic disciplines. The first, military history, is mainly focused on “the histories of armed forces, not only in peacetime but also in times of war”. Therefore, it has felt “more at ease in wars fought by armies and navies than in wars fought between warrior societies, or prior to the professionalization of soldiering” [1]. The second is the more varied history of war, or what many academics have referred to as “new” military history [2], which focuses on how armies and governments planned, prepared, and waged war. This area of study evaluates the “place of war in society”, paying particular attention to how it has affected cultures and people as well as how it has been experienced, understood, and justified [3]. Another important aspect of war history is the role that conflict had in bringing about social, political, economic, and military transformation. However, military welfare history is a third academic discipline that overlaps and enhances the other two.

As a scholarly project, military welfare history is both well developed and still evolving. It comprises a substantial community of scholars who have produced a robust body of literature. Military welfare examines the variety of welfare, care, medical provisions, and social policies that have existed at various times and within various social and political spaces with regard to and for the benefit of armed forces personnel and their families or dependents. Haddie and Carney [4] correctly assert that military welfare is a significant but abstract sub-field of warfare studies and warfare history.

Thinking about military welfare brings up a lot of issues. Not all of these concerns have been fully investigated, and those that have raised new questions in the past and will continue to do so. How, for example, do a state and its armed forces get ready for a war in order to provide for their soldiers? How does that concern change in a war? And the postwar period? How does a society or state take care of its veterans’ needs? Furthermore, how long is a post-war era exactly? Until every veteran passes away? Until the beginning of the next big conflict? And whether considering military welfare before to, during, or post-war, does it essentially refer to cash benefits and health care?

And what about the dependents of servicemen? How come the state, the military, or even the general people care for the welfare of their wives and kids? And for what duration is that duty to care for dependents? Regarding a soldier’s offspring, is legitimacy important? And what about a serviceman’s parents? What role do they play in any welfare calculations? Many of these issues have been covered in the cases from the UK and Ireland by Jennine Hurl-Eamon, Eliza Reidi, Paul Huddie, and Lynn McKay, as well as in the German case by Amy Carney [5].

Ukrainian scientist O. Hetmanets [6] notes that protection of national interests relies on the conditions that the state creates to ensure the material and spiritual needs of military personnel as an important factor in the organization of the country’s defense. According to the Law of Ukraine “On Social and Legal Protection of Servicemen and Members of Their Families” (Law No. 2011-XII), social protection of servicemen is an activity (function) of the state aimed at establishing a system of legal and social guarantees that ensure the implementation of constitutional rights and freedoms, meeting the material and spiritual needs of military personnel in accordance with the special type of their official activity, status in society, maintaining social stability in the military environment. The implementation of the social function of the state depends on the legal provision of financing of special social payments, which, according to Law No. 2011-XII, are defined as benefits, guarantees, compensations, and other types of material assistance that satisfy the interests of military personnel in the appropriate amount at the expense of budget allocations. Therefore, the observance of legality in the financial provision of special social payments to the military depends on the financial and legal foundations, which are a guarantee of the state’s performance of the social function.

At the same time, conflicts, inaccuracies, and disagreements in the current legislation of Ukraine regarding the financing of social protection of military personnel prevent the implementation of this function of the state, which requires improvement of the current budget legislation in order to clarify

the essence of related laws and the practice of the budget process at a stage of the budget law preparation. An example of the lack of legal grounds for the financial settlement of issues of servicemen' social protection is the proposed by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine payment of additional monetary remuneration to military personnel for the period of martial law, which is introduced by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine "Issues of certain payments to servicemen, rank and file officers, police officers and their families under time of martial law" dated February 28, 2022 No. 168. The implementation of this Resolution requires amendments to the budget law, which can only be made legislatively, but it contains a reference: "The Ministry of Finance to work out the issue of increasing expenditures to the relevant managers of budget funds to ensure the implementation of this resolution". Therefore, the indicated initiative of the Government is not provided with a legal mechanism of financing, since the increase of expenses during the period of martial law is possible through the adoption of the corresponding law on amendments to the budget law. Also, the introduction of new ones does not cancel other social benefits provided for by Law No. 2011-XII, but requires additional budget funds.

On May 4, 2024, Law No. 3621-IX "On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on Ensuring the Rights of Military and Police Officers to Social Protection" entered into force in Ukraine. The law provides, in particular, that servicemen called up for military service during mobilization, for a special period, for the entire duration of their service, and servicemen during a special period who took part or are participating in an anti-terrorist operation, ensuring its implementation or in implementation of measures to ensure national security and defense, repel and deter armed aggression of the Russian Federation in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, ensuring of their implementation, in measures necessary to ensure the defense of Ukraine, protect the safety of the population and the interests of the state in connection with the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, - fines, penalties for non-fulfillment of obligations to enterprises, institutions and organizations of all forms of ownership, including banks and individuals, as well as interest for the use of credit are not accrued, except for credit agreements for the purchase of property that is assigned whether it will be attributed to objects of the housing fund (residential building, apartment, future real estate object, object of unfinished residential construction, property rights to them), and/or car.

The amount of one-time monetary assistance in the event of the death of a serviceman during the period of martial law is determined by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, taking into account the following:

- The amount of one-time cash benefit paid in the event of the death of a serviceman while performing his military service duties cannot be less than UAH 1,500,000;
- The amount of one-time monetary assistance paid in other cases cannot be less than the amount of one-time monetary assistance provided for by subparagraph "a" of paragraph 1 of Article 16-2 of the Law "On Social and Legal Protection of Servicemen and Members of Their Families".

Ukraine is introducing new incentives for military personnel in the current year of 2024. The new mobilization reform includes increased pay for Ukrainian military personnel, explanations of various incentives for military personnel, and an extra UAH 100,000 in compensation for active troops under specific conditions. By the end of 2024, the minimum pay for a soldier in Ukraine will be UAH 33,000. This includes a conscript's base wage of UAH 20,000 and an extra UAH 13,000 for military rank. There is a 1.5% military tax exemption on these payments. If members of the air defense, artillery, or missile squads confront the enemy outside of the fighting zone, they will be paid UAH 100,000. Monthly payments of UAH 100,000 are also made to those who directly participate in hostilities or oversee national security and defense measures in areas of active conflict. Captured military personnel, hostages, those detained in neutral states, and those reported missing in action are all eligible to receive this reward [7]. With effect from May 18, the mobilization reform offers military members a number of incentives, such as [7]:

- Maintaining financial assistance while receiving ongoing medical care and on leave
- Payment (compensation) for meals and other necessities, together with the necessary paperwork

- A UAH 150,000 automobile purchase certificate that becomes accessible three months after the deal is signed
- Extra time off for up to 15 days
- Rewards for taking out or destroying opposing armaments
- Payment of 50% of the initial installment of a residential mortgage loan for new contracts, plus an extra UAH 100,000 after the first and second years of service
- Exemption for military soldiers and their spouses from fines, penalties, and interest on loans
- Parental leave being included in the length of military service
- Partially awarded annual leave throughout the whole of the calendar year, with a minimum of 15 days of continuous leave
- One month of service is awarded for every three months of duty rendered in combat zones
- After being released from captivity, an extra ninety days of unbroken vacation with financial assistance
- A one-time payment of UAH 15 million to a serviceman's family in the case of their passing

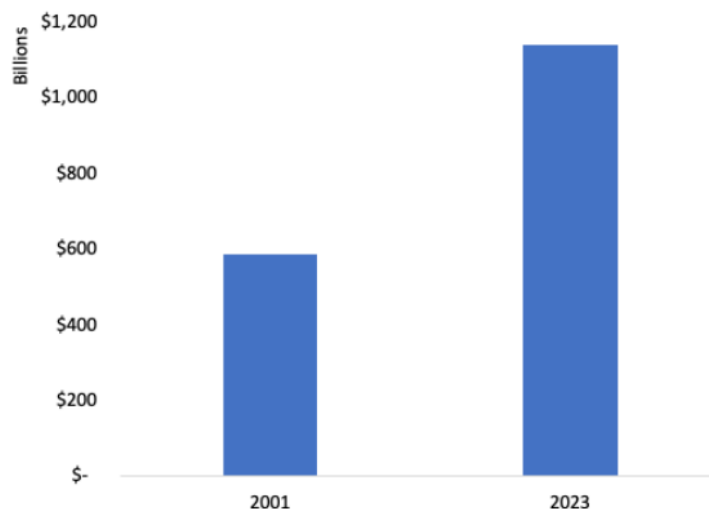
Taking into account the general level of social protection in Ukraine, it can be said that the process of building a “military welfare state” is taking place in the country.

Ukrainian researcher Yu. Chaliuk [8], in her article “‘Warstate’ and ‘Welfare state’: conflict or synergy of military strategy and social security of Ukraine” writes about “Ukrainian model of functioning of the state in conditions of war as a symbiosis, a combination of an effective policy of social protection of the population and strengthening military power of the country through systematic support of the army: “a strong rear - a strong army”. The author claims that “The large-scale war of Russia against sovereign Ukraine, like a litmus test, revealed the instability of the world system and convincingly proves the need to develop a Ukrainian model of a “social welfare state in conditions of war” with an emphasis on strengthening the military component” [8]. There is a statement in the article that the First and Second World Wars played a significant role in the formation of the welfare state. European countries, such as Great Britain and France, have created comprehensive social security systems to support the war-affected population. Their systems were aimed at providing support for veterans, widows, and the unemployed. The creation of such welfare systems was a response to the potential future social and political unrest that often follows war, as governments sought to preserve social stability and prevent the growth of radical movements.

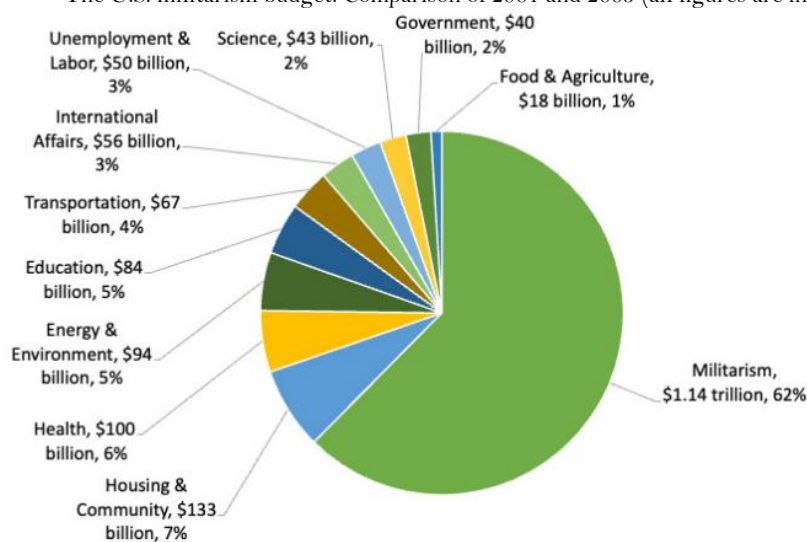
Chaliuk [8] rightly notes that scientific discourse on this issue is characterized by two approaches. The first one defines only the negative social consequences of military and defense expenditures, when the process of armament, war, and militarization should lead to economic stagnation and a reduction in social expenditures. The second one involves a compromise and takes into account the fact that immediately before or during the war, funds are directed to military needs. However, the author asserts that in the long term, the increase in spending on defense and military security of the state, as a rule, does not lead to unemployment, a decrease in spending on pensions and health care. This opinion, in fact, expresses the overall trends in today Ukrainian establishment and economic policy, and dangerous implications of this vector of development are not taken into account. Meanwhile, it is expedient to study the situation in U.S. economy and welfare which arose due to skyrocketing of military spending.

The Institute for Policy Studies’ L. Koshgarian et al. [9] issue a warning, stating that wellbeing is jeopardized by subsidizing military. The authors point out that in FY2023, militarized programs that involve the use of force or the threat of force or imprisonment accounted for \$1.1 trillion, or 62%, of the \$1.8 trillion federal discretionary budget. These programs included war and weapons, law enforcement and mass incarceration, and detention and deportation. Federal investments in people and communities, such as public education at the elementary and secondary levels, housing initiatives, child care programs, federal disaster assistance, environmental initiatives, and scientific research, accounted for less than \$2 of every \$5 in discretionary government spending. In the United States, discretionary spending on militarism has increased by \$2 for every \$1 increase in community investment since 2001. Since 2001, the funding for militarization has almost quadrupled (see Fig. 1). After twenty years of

conflict, several deployments for the 3 million veterans who fought in the post-9/11 era, and an increase in the physical and mental health requirements of returning veterans, spending on veteran care has almost quadrupled since 2001. Figure 2 illustrates the militarization of the government budget during FY2023.



**Figure 1.** The U.S. militarism budget: Comparison of 2001 and 2003 (all figures are in 2023 dollars) [9].



**Figure 2.** Militarization of the U.S. federal budget in FY2023 [9].

According to Koshgarian et al. [9], the majority in Congress is seeking significant cuts to the discretionary budget in return for expanding the country's legally-mandated debt ceiling, posing a serious danger to the American economy. If this is not resolved quickly, the country may fall behind on its obligations. A catastrophic recession and the abrupt termination of everything from Social Security benefits to military compensation are possible outcomes. This is not the first time that right-wing politicians have used this threat, and it is probably not the last.

The damage caused by these initiatives is increased by the concurrent underfunding of other pressing issues and crises. Over the previous 20 years, the Department of Homeland Security was funded more than seven times as much as the Centers for Disease Control, which led to the underpreparedness that allowed the COVID-19 pandemic to kill 1.1 million people in the United States. Furthermore, the United States has not adequately addressed the climate catastrophe. We could have invested roughly four times as much on a national electric system powered entirely by renewable energy sources to mitigate the effects of climate change as we did in the military during the 9/11 wars. The FAA system failure that affected thousands of flights and the hazardous threat posed by a train catastrophe in East Palestine, Ohio, both demonstrated evidence of underinvestment in road, rail, and air traffic safety programs. Additionally, a lot of K-12 public schools rely on federal financing to act as a buffer against the disproportionately local and uneven funding supplied by states and cities, which is already causing staffing shortages and a mental health crisis among students [9].

This deep and detailed study by Koshgarian et al. evidently demonstrates crucial harm of the paradigm “warfare state = welfare state”. There are also other data and analyses, clearly demonstrating negative effect of raising military expenditures on economic development and welfare. Specifically, L. Saeed [10] shows that a 1-percentage point increase in military spending relative to GDP lowers economic development by 1.10 percentage points, based on empirical analysis of panel data covering 133 nations from 1960 to 2012.

Currently, Ukraine is capable of maintaining social security in non-military areas due to aid from foreign partners. But if this aid for some reasons (political, economic, etc.) will significantly decline or stop, the country could face devastating consequences of budget imbalances.

### 3. Research Methodology

The methodological basis of the study is the systemic and dialectical method of cognition, which allows considering phenomena in their development, interrelation, and interdependence. The methodological prerequisites and bases of the work are the fundamental provisions of the system-formational theory, the principles of institutional analysis. In addition, the following methods were used in the work: historical, statistical, analysis, synthesis. At the same time, the authors were guided by the requirements of the fundamental epistemological principles of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, the unity of the historical and logical in cognition, and the initial methodological premises were various theoretical approaches in the modern understanding of the welfare state. The theory of securitization, developed by representatives of social constructivism, was also used in the work.

### 4. Results and Discussion

In the USA, the military provides extremely attractive perk and compensation packages. Active duty is a full-time position that offers incentives, housing allowances, cost-of-living adjustments, and unmatched possibilities in addition to guaranteed salary. Despite being part-time, the Reserves provide many of the same advantages. One makes more money the longer he serves and the higher his position rises.

An enrollment bonus is the initial possibility for a financial prize when joining. Branch-specific enlistment incentives fluctuate based on the demands of the military. Recruiters may also provide chances to enroll at better pay grades (advanced enlistment rank) in addition to enlistment bonuses. The majority of recruits begin at grade E-1, the lowest of the nine enlisted pay grades; however, eligible enlistees may begin in grade E-2 or E-3, which entails greater basic pay [11].

Additionally, there is extra compensation. Beyond the base pay, military personnel may earn additional benefits based on their position and length of service. Enlisted flyer incentive pay, submarine duty pay, and hazardous duty pay are a few instances of specific compensation.

Furthermore, a military serviceman who enlists immediately after high school is not denied a college education. The armed forces can assist with educational expenses or student debt repayment. While serving on active service, the majority of enlistees are qualified for the Tuition Assistance

Program (TAP), which covers up to 100% of college expenses. The GI Bill, the Army, Navy, and Marine College Funds, college debt payback (including student loan forgiveness), and student loan deferment and forbearance are examples of Armed Forces education benefit programs. Specifically, the majority of veterans and active-duty personnel will get full tuition reimbursement from public institutions across the country under the GI Bill, and a portion of the tuition at private or international schools. The GI Bill may be used for technical education, job certification, apprenticeships and on-the-job training, special licensing programs, and more. It is not limited to usage for college. There is no temporal restriction on when members of the armed forces can use their GI Bill. Additionally, a lot of service veterans could decide to provide their family members access to their GI Bill. Active-duty and Reserve military personnel may be eligible for the education Fund, sometimes referred to as a “GI Bill kicker”, which is an extra monthly education benefit included in an enlistment or reenlistment contract. The requirements and sums differ depending on the service.

Nearly one in four adult Social Security claimants has served in the armed forces, with 9.4 million veterans of the United States military now receiving benefits. Furthermore, almost 40% of adult Social Security beneficiaries are veterans and their families. Veterans and their families are of special concern to legislators, who have offered benefits through a number of government initiatives, including as Social Security credits, house loan guarantees, and pensions and compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs [11].

According to statistics, the majority of veterans are men, in contrast to the more equally distributed male and female population among all adult Social Security claimants. When it comes to adult Social Security claimants, military veterans are less likely to be poor or near poor than the general beneficiary population, and they are more likely to be married and have completed high school. Of all adult Social Security claimants, 25% have incomes below 150 percent of the poverty line; among veterans, 14% get payments below this threshold. Veterans also get considerably greater Social Security payments, which is indicative of their superior economic standing [12].

A major incentive to keep a career military force is the military retirement system, which is a government-funded, noncontributory defined benefit program. The system now provides disability payments for those judged medically incapable of serving, monthly compensation for qualified active and reserve retirees, and a survivor annuity scheme for eligible survivors of deceased retirees. Time served, base pay at retirement, and yearly cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) all affect the amount of compensation. In addition, non-cash benefits such as health care benefits, commissary and exchange privileges, and access to Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) facilities and activities are granted to retired military personnel.

Active component, reserve component, and disability retiree are the three broad kinds of military retirees. After 20 years of service (YOS), active component troops are eligible for retirement (vested). Although they are eligible based on a points system after 20 years of creditable service, reserve troops often do not start receiving retirement benefits until they are 60 years old. Lastly, in order to get retired pay, a person with a disability retirement does not necessarily need to have served 20 years; instead, they must have been determined to be ineligible for additional duty because of a stable, permanent disability.

Department of Defense (DOD) committed \$65.4 billion for 2.3 million veterans and survivors in FY2022. A significant amount of money might be saved on military retirement because of the program's size, according to some. Some have contended that previous adjustments made in an effort to cut costs have had a detrimental impact on military recruitment and retention. Potential modifications to the retirement system are widely watched by families, veterans' interest organizations, and retired military personnel. Congress may decide to weigh the advantages of the military retirement program as a retention tool against budgetary restrictions, as well as the demands and concerns of its voters, while evaluating alternatives to the existing system [13].

Jennifer Mittelstadt [14] writes: “Long in retreat in the US, the welfare state found a haven in an unlikely place – the military, where it thrived for decades”. While everyone acknowledges that the US

military has grown to be a worldwide powerhouse, according to the author, relatively few are aware that the US military also built a sizable welfare state in addition to bases and weapons. With US wealth declining in the last decades of the 20th century, over 10 million active-duty soldiers and their tens of millions of family members looked on the military for social and economic stability. The military welfare state is concealed in plain sight, its welfare role obscured by its support for waging war. A welfare network with greater structure would only be accessible to America's wealthiest citizens. For troops and their families, military social welfare offers a nearly comprehensive range of services, including housing, healthcare, childcare, family counseling, legal support, educational perks, and more. These programs represent a safety net worth billions of dollars annually, sometimes amounting to almost half of the DoD budget. Their true expenses were dispersed over many defense budget divisions, resulting in a system so large that the Department of Defense admitted it was impossible to calculate its whole cost. However, a lot may be learned about welfare and citizenship from the history of the military welfare state. Its ascent coincided with the demise of the civilian welfare state and, in many cases, precipitated it, resulting in a disparate and divergent set of benefits. Furthermore, the recent dramatic privatization and outsourcing of the military welfare state portends an even more perilous future for the civilian welfare state [14].

It is interesting to note that past iterations of military welfare stimulated larger social welfare initiatives for the American people. Pensions from the American Civil War led the way for government retirement and disability benefits, as well as civilian retirement pensions. The earliest paradigm of government health service was established by the healthcare provided to veterans following World War I. Additionally, the GI Bill from the Second World War propelled millions of former civilian draftees and their families into the middle class and established government assistance for housing and education for all citizens. After 1973, the contemporary military welfare state never promoted social welfare for the general public. In complete contrast. The gap between the military and civilian population expanded in the late 20th century as fewer Americans within a smaller demographic range enlisted for military duty. The gap between the new military welfare state and the current civilian one also widened. The military increased its welfare activities between the 1970s and the early 1990s, a period during which many civilian welfare programs shrank, public and private unions collapsed, and businesses reduced private employment benefits [15].

The military welfare state drew some of the same opponents as the civilian welfare state did when it expanded and thrived. Programs that, in the opinion of some within and without the military, imitated the welfare state in civilian life by feminizing the institution, promoting reliance, and expanding the state were not universally embraced. A few officers, both active and retired, were concerned that social welfare might erode the military's emphasis on martial arts and convert commanders into "social workers". Republican congressman for Tennessee and former naval officer Robin Beard, as well as former senator from Virginia and 2016 presidential candidate Jim Webb, both claimed in the late 1970s and early 1980s that the army had become a "babysitting service" due to the presence of female soldiers and their duties to their husbands [15].

Free-market economists, a group seldom associated with the military, launched an even more potent assault on the military welfare state from outside its ranks. Free-market economists detested the military welfare state's expansion of "big government", while military officers fretted about welfare's deterioration of their organization [16].

Social welfare in the US has not improved, nor have troops or civilians benefited from the change of the military welfare state. For troops, this has meant serving in Iraq and Afghanistan during wartime under commanders who demanded that they and their families demonstrate what the military eventually came to refer to as "resilience". While the word "resilience" originated from recent psychology research on creating good responses to trauma, its practical application required troops to possess the same level of "self-reliance" that the military had instituted in the 1990s. Given the historically high rates of traumatic brain injuries, suicides, and brain injuries sustained by military members and their families during the protracted battles, it was, at best, an impractical expectation. When troops and their families



did want assistance, they were more likely to turn to private contractors than the military: social workers employed by family support programs, doctors hired by national healthcare firms, or international real estate companies. The army's capacity to address the issues affecting military men and their families was weakened when support programs were turned over to private contractors [12].

There has always been discussion in Australia on the best system for paying military compensation during peacetime. In essence, there are three possible policy choices: 1) conformity to the Commonwealth Government's workers' compensation plans for civilian employees; 2) conformity to the repatriation program designed during and after World War I to accommodate the requirements of the hundreds of thousands of veterans returning from active duty abroad; and 3) a distinct program for peacetime military compensation, contingent on the particulars of military service [17].

The Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act of 2004 established a different, all-inclusive legislative plan for Defense Force compensation, including injuries sustained during service after the plan's July 1st start date.

Today, briefly, benefits for military can be summarized as follows [18]:

- Excellent pay from the start that rises with experience.
- Superannuation of 16.4% is generous, 4.9% over the Australian average.
- Subsidized housing loans, rent assistance, or property buying assistance.
- For a military member and his family, free medical and dental treatment as well as subsidized healthcare.

- Completely compensated training.

The Defense Force Welfare Association is one such group in Australia. All Australian Defense Force personnel, both past and present, as well as their families, are impacted by its activities. The Defense Force Welfare Association is a pan-Australian organization having branches and chapters in Canberra, Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Perth in addition to its national office in Canberra. Additionally, it has representatives in the Northern Territory, North Queensland, Tasmania, and the state of New South Wales. Currently serving and former members of the Australian Defense Force, along with their families and individuals with an interest in veteran welfare concerns, make up the membership. The Regular Defense Force Welfare Association (RDFWA), which was established in 1959, was created with the intention of advancing and defending the rights of current and past members of the Australian Defense Force - then known as the Permanent Forces of the Commonwealth - as well as their families.

In order to battle the government and bureaucracy on behalf of all service people during the switch from the DFRB Pension Scheme to the DFRDB, this group was founded by current and former military members. During lengthy talks and negotiations with the Joint Select Parliamentary DFRB Committee, which was established to study the DFRB law and supervise the adoption of the DFRDB, it effectively defended their interests. Mr. John Jess CBE MP, the Committee Chairman, responded to RDFWA by saying, "It is important that every serviceman join and stay with the RDFWA and have a strong voice" [18]. The RDFWA was renamed the Defense Force Welfare Association (DFWA) in 2007 to reflect the fact that we now include reserve and full-time members in our mission. The goals are to defend and enhance the pay and working conditions for all active Australian Defense Force personnel, to push for just and equitable handling of retirement benefits, and to push for better government access to and provision of veteran support services.

The complicated compensation structure that veterans, their families, and Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) staff in Australia must navigate is thought to have resulted from the accumulation of layers of military compensation legislation, the development of civilian workers' compensation schemes, and the necessity of adapting to each wave of operational and non-operational service [19]. The DVA's procedures, structures, culture, and environment are the areas that require change the most, and these are being addressed under the present transformation project. There is no denying that Australia's military compensation system has to be improved, but; methodical legislative change will help to integrate the concepts of Veteran Centric change into the law and promote more straightforward

procedures and improved outcomes for veterans. All parties involved in the military compensation system will need to contribute to this and show their support. To the long-term benefit of the veteran population, it serves, further reform and enhanced cooperation will provide DVA with the chance to concentrate in the future on crucial areas of policy creation, commissions, stakeholder and veteran involvement, and governance.

Current issues in military compensation law in Australia include, in particular, complexity - a plethora of legislation and schemes [20]: VEA; SRCA/DRCA, 1971 Act & 1930 Act; MRCA and MRC (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2004; Military Compensation Act 1994; Defense Act 1903 / Defense Determinations Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006; Treatment Benefits (Special Access) Act 2019 Superannuation - Defense Force Retirement and Death Benefits Act 1973; Military Superannuation and Benefits Act 1991; Australian Defense Force Superannuation Act 2015; Australian Defense Force Cover Act 2015.

Despite the existence of these issues and various other derived and independent challenges, Australian system of social protection of military personnel seems not making any significant influence on overall social wellbeing in the country and deterioration of economic indices.

Meanwhile, New Zealand, a neighbor, has recently concentrated on securitization, especially in light of China's geopolitical concerns. An example of how securitization is being implemented is the rise in budgetary allocations for defense programs and salaries. In May 2024, Defense Minister Judith Collins declared that \$571 million in more funds will be allocated for Defense Force projects and salaries in the next budget. Collins states, "This funding will help ensure we retain our servicemen and women as we navigate an increasingly unstable environment. They make New Zealand proud around the world" [21]. Of the extra cash, \$163 million will be used to raise pay for New Zealand Defence Force employees, while \$408 million will be used to upgrade infrastructure and equipment. Although members of the NZDF are the first line of defense for New Zealand, they need the proper tools and surroundings to do their duties effectively [21]. The extra financing comes from savings in the NZDF budget totaling \$99 million. The announcement that New Zealand's defense budget will rise by NZ\$571 million over the next four years is encouraging given that the majority of government ministries in the country are seeing substantial budget cutbacks. Collins' statement, according to Massey University associate professor of international relations and security studies Damien Rogers, was "unremarkable" for a right-of-center administration, ADM was informed. According to him, there is not enough discussion in New Zealand over the direction of military and foreign policy, which has to be put to the test and challenged [22]. Additionally, the budget boosts military personnel's pay by NZ\$4,000 to NZ\$15,000, starting on July 1 and costing NZ\$419 million over four years. Some resignation letters have been withdrawn as a result of the hike, according to Defense Minister Andrew Little [23].

Thus, New Zealand also follows the way that became very 'popular' today - increasing benefits and social benefits for military personnel. But it is necessary to remember that 'increasing' does not automatically mean 'enhancing'. National systems of social protection, mechanisms and means of maintaining welfare state are complex and sensitive, and when considering the issues of increasing compensation and social benefits for military, it is extremely necessary to forecast long-term effects, since they can be significantly detrimental, as it was demonstrated above. For Ukraine, these concerns are particularly important, especially in the current conditions of war and the need, on the one hand, to effectively protect the country from aggression and on the other hand, enable economic and social resilience.

## 5. Conclusion

The developing global tendencies of securitization provide the foundation for the many logics supporting and justifying sound - and in some cases, unprecedented - increases in military spending, including pay, perks, and social protection for military personnel. Securitization is a discursive tool that helps actors reshape their subjectivities. Securitization and crises are strongly related ideas. Crises are times when existential risks are perceived to be at the forefront of the political and social agenda,

necessitating the need for important decisions to be made. Securitizations legitimize practices that would not be deemed acceptable in non-crisis scenarios by invoking and constructing these risks. Furthermore, certain logics, assumptions, and imaginaries are at play when anxieties are discursively constructed; this process is not politically neutral.

The book “Military Spending and Global Security”, edited by J. Rufanges [24], draws on previous research and knowledge on military spending but also presents a comprehensive, in-depth, and unique analysis of military spending as a significant and frequently disregarded contributing factor to global instability. It explores the present and future effects of this spending’s unrelenting growth as well as the rationale behind it. The authors contend that escalating military spending is not the most effective way to address the crises that militarization has contributed to. They contend that militarization both contributes to and is a reaction to the serious issues affecting our society. The book shows why nation-states that constantly compete with one another to outgun each other in terms of military might and size do not serve the interests of the people well.

Furthermore, as correctly pointed out by M. DiGiuseppe [25], advantageous access to sovereign financing gives governments more freedom to invest in security by enabling political incumbents to loosen fixed-budget restrictions.

Thus, for Ukrainian government, military establishment, and expert community, it is crucially expedient to thoroughly study and analyze the experience of other states in all regions of the world in constructing a system of economic and legal principles of social protection for military personnel, not allowing securitization existential fears to harm social welfare and bring entropy to welfare state development.

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