

Video: The Political Power of Weapons

By [Manlio Dinucci](#)

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European Markets and Union on alert, opposition on the attack, a reminder about the Constitution by the President of the Republic, all this because the government-planned financial manoeuvre, which has already been announced, would lead to a deficit of about 27 billion Euros. On the other hand, absolute silence from the government and the opposition about the fact that every year, Italy spends a similar sum for its military budget.

Military spending for 2018 is approximately 25 billion Euros, to which must be added other posts of a military character, bringing the total to more than 27 billion. This means more than 70 million Euros per day, which is on the increase because Italy has promised NATO to bring it up to about 100 million per day.

Why is no-one talking about the growing expenditure of public money for weapons, armed forces and military interventions? Because that would entail opposing the United States, the “privileged ally” (read ‘dominant’), which is demanding a continual increase of this spending.

US spending for its armed forces in fiscal year 2019 (which began on 1 October 2018) exceeds 700 billion dollars, to which must be added other military costs, including almost 200 billion for retired military personnel. The total military spending of the United States has thus grown to more than 1,000 billion dollars annually, a quarter of all federal expenditure. An increasing investment in war which permits the United States (according to the Pentagon’s official motivation) to “remain the pre-eminent military power in the world, to ensure that the balance of power stays in our favour, and to advance an international order which favours our prosperity to the maximum”.

Source: PandoraTV

But in fiscal year 2019, military spending will create a deficit of almost 1,000 billion dollars in the federal budget. Later, this will cause an increase of the US government’s debt, rising to about 21,500 billion dollars. This will be absorbed in the interior by cuts in social spending, and, in the exterior, by printing more dollars, used as the principal currency of world monetary reserves and the quotations for prime materials.

However, nobody benefits from increased military spending. We are dealing here with the giants of the war industries. Of the ten largest world producers of weaponry, six are US companies – Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Raytheon Company, Northrop Grumman, General Dynamics, and L3 Technologies. They are followed by the British company BAE Systems, the French/Dutch company Airbus, the Italian company Leonardo (ex-Finmeccanica), now running ninth, and the French company Thales.

These are not simply huge factories which produce weapons. Together, they form a military-industrial complex, closely integrated with institutions and parties, with deep and wide-reaching ramifications. This creates a true arms establishment, whose profits and powers increase as international tension and war increase.

Leonardo, which earned 85 % of its profits from arms sales, is integrated with the US military-industrial complex – it supplies products and services not only to the armed forces and agencies of the Pentagon, but also to US intelligences agencies, while in Italy it manages the Cameri site for Lockheed Martin's F-35 fighters.

In September, Leonardo was chosen by the Pentagon, with Boeing as its primary contract employee, to supply the US Air Force with AW139 attack helicopters. In August, Fincantieri (controlled by the financial company of the Minister of the Economy and Finance) and Lockheed Martin, delivered two more littoral combat ships to the US Navy.

We need to keep all that in mind when we ask ourselves why, in Italian parliamentary organisations and institutions, there is such an overwhelming multi-partisan consensus – not for cutting into the budget, but for increasing military spending.

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Translated by Pete Kimberley

Manlio Dinucci is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization.

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About the author:

Manlio Dinucci est géographe et journaliste. Il a une chronique hebdomadaire "L'art de la guerre" au quotidien italien il manifesto. Parmi ses derniers livres: Geocommunity (en trois tomes) Ed. Zanichelli 2013; Geolaboratorio, Ed. Zanichelli 2014; Se dici guerra..., Ed. Kappa Vu 2014.

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