

Seventy years on

World War II: The essential lessons

Joint public meeting of the Socialist Equality Party, Britain and Germany

22 September 2009

World War II engulfed the entire European continent, pitting all of the continental powers in the bloodiest slaughter in world history. At the war's end, with fascism defeated, it was possible to restabilise European capitalism thanks to the political betrayal of the working class by Stalinism and the economic rescue of Germany and the other ruined Axis powers by US imperialism.

For more than half a century, war was proclaimed to be inconceivable between the European allies united within NATO against the Soviet Union. Then, following the dissolution of the USSR and the restoration of capitalism, the "end of history" was proclaimed along with the triumph of liberal capitalist democracy.

Instead we have witnessed an explosion of militarism, with wars in the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq, and the threat of war against Iran. Tensions between the major powers grow sharper, against a background of the worst economic crisis since the 1930s that is plunging millions into unemployment and social misery.

The parallels with the years leading up to the Second World War are clear. It is time to learn the lessons of history, so as to prepare the working class for the period ahead on the basis of a socialist programme.

Speakers from the European sections of the International Committee of the Fourth International, as well as French comrades, will outline the central lessons to be drawn from the terrible events of the 1930s and 1940s and why the independent political mobilization of the working class remains the only

means of opposing the renewed dangers of militarism, war and economic depression.

Speakers include:

Peter Schwarz, Partei fur Soziale Gleichheit, Secretary of the International Committee of the Fourth International

Chris Marsden, National Secretary of the Socialist Equality Party (UK)

London

Sunday 11 October, 2 pm
University of London Union, Room 3a,
Malet Street, WC1E 7HY

Nearest tubes: Goodge Street/Russell Square/Euston Square



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact