

German Left Party supports imperialist intervention in Syria

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The Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, which is affiliated to the Left Party, and the International Peace Initiative for Syria (IPIS) recently held a conference in Dusseldorf under the title of “Syria: Is a political solution possible?”.

Among the participants were leading representatives of the Left Party and the Syrian opposition. These included Wolfgang Gehrcke, the foreign policy spokesman for the Left Party parliamentary faction, Michel Kilo from the Syrian Democratic Forum, and Samir Abu Laban of the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood forms the majority faction in the National Syrian Coalition (NSC), which is supported by imperialism.

The IPIS is a broad grouping of politicians, trade unionists, academics, UN officials, writers, theologians and economists, who see themselves as “part of international civil society”. Among them are parliamentary deputies of the Left Party such as Annette Groth and Andrej Hunko, Greek SYRIZA politician and European parliament member Nikolaos Houndis, leading member of the Spanish United Left coalition Jesus Iglesias Fernández, former US ambassador Edward Peck, and petty-bourgeois ex-radicals like Tariq Ali.

The conference’s fraudulent slogan of “Yes to democracy, no to military intervention” and empty phrases about a “political solution to the conflict” attempt to divert attention from the organisation’s actual support for a violent imperialist intervention to overthrow Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and install a pro-Western puppet regime in Syria.

Muslim Brother Abu Laban openly demanded at the conference that “the international community provide the rebels with ammunition and weapons”. According to a report by the Left Party-affiliated newspaper, *Junge Welt*, Abu Laban praised the Free Syrian Army (FSA), declaring it had created a military structure because “the international community wanted to know whom it should supply with military equipment”. He said the leadership

of the FSA had the task of deciding “on the attacks to be launched and the distribution of weapons and munitions to the combat troops”.

From the very beginning, the Left Party has operated as an extended arm of imperialist intervention and its agents in Syria, and pushed for war. However, until now it has sought to conceal its direct involvement with the Islamist forces, financed and armed by US imperialism. (See: “German Left Party defends its support for war against Syria”, 14 January 2013)

At a time when the Obama administration is pressing for imperialist intervention in Syria and the French and British governments are calling for massive arms shipments to the Syrian rebel groups, the Left Party is seeking more direct collaboration with the Islamists and Washington.

The invitation to the meeting states: “A negotiated solution—i.e., a compromise in favour of a democratic transformation by means of a cease-fire, a transitional government and eventual free elections—has long been rejected by both sides, including their international supporters. In recent months, however, there have been strong indications that the forces on both sides who advocate negotiations are gaining ascendancy. They finally seem to have found a sympathetic ear even in Washington”.

The claim that US imperialism in Syria will strive to organise a cease-fire, let alone a “democratic transformation”, is absurd. It is a cynical attempt by the Left Party to conceal its support for the US-led military plundering of Syria by airing fine words about “democracy” and “peace”.

The Left Party’s collaboration with reactionary Islamists and the US administration speaks volumes about its true nature as a right-wing, pro-imperialist party.

Washington and its regional allies, Turkey and the Gulf monarchies, have spent the last two years organising the

systematic destruction of Syria and fomenting acts of sectarian violence that have had devastating consequences for the civilian population. According to the UN, approximately 70,000 Syrians have been killed and millions more forced to flee their homes and country since the fighting began.

In order to overthrow Assad and accelerate preparations for war against Iran, Washington and its regional allies are mobilising the most reactionary Islamist forces. Just a few days before the party conference, the Syrian Al-Nusra Front—one of the largest and most powerful rebel groups in Syria—declared its affiliation with the Al-Qaeda terrorist organisation.

The US officially classified the Al-Nusra Front as a terrorist organisation last December. Since then, however, this has not stopped it from collaborating closely with the Gulf regimes to step up support for the Syrian rebels.

In late March, the *New York Times* published an article declaring: “With help from the C.I.A., Arab governments and Turkey have sharply increased their military aid to Syria’s opposition fighters in recent months, expanding a secret airlift of arms and equipment for the uprising against President Bashar al-Assad.” According to “conservative estimates”, about 3,500 tons of military equipment were delivered by more than 160 transport planes.

The official claim on the part of the organisers of these armaments—i.e., that they rejected a “military intervention”—is a lie that merely serves to disguise their real position. The truth is that the IPIS advocates an intensification of the war. In its most recent declaration, it insists on “the creation of demilitarised zones with access for humanitarian organizations”.

The call for a “demilitarised zone” is tantamount to calling for a no-fly zone, as urged by many sections of the Syrian opposition, including the NSC. Abu Laban is also an outspoken advocate of a no-fly zone. The establishment of such a zone would be exploited by NATO as the justification for direct military intervention and the start of a brutal bombing campaign, like the one waged in Libya.

Participants in the conference resorted to spreading brazenly untruthful propaganda to conceal their drive for a “humanitarian intervention”. Martin Glasenapp, a member of the medico international aid agency and the Adopt a Revolution initiative, called for “more empathy for social revolt” in Syria.

The claim that a “social revolt” is underway in Syria is a mockery of what is really happening in the country. The

rebels, dominated by Islamist forces, are not waging a “social revolt” against the Assad regime; they are plundering and terrorising the Syrian population in the areas they occupy.

In late December, the British *Guardian* newspaper published a series of interviews with opposition fighters in Aleppo, evidencing the predatory character of the armed opposition.

A rebel leader said: “I liberate an area, I need resources and ammunition, so I start looting government properties. When this is finished, I turn to looting other properties and I become a thief.” Another fighter reported that “Everything has been looted” in Aleppo, the country’s former industrial centre, and “Everything is gone”.

Amnesty International wrote in a report published in March that rebel groups, including some belonging to the FSA, “are summarily killing people with a chilling sense of impunity, and the death toll continues to rise as more towns and villages come under the control of armed opposition groups.”

The support for Islamist terrorist forces that serve imperialism as shock troops to enforce its strategic and economic interests in the Middle East illustrates the counter-revolutionary character of the Left Party and the entire international pseudo-left.

The integration of these prosperous sections of the middle class into the imperialist establishment is a response to the deepening crisis of capitalism and the recurrence of mass revolutionary struggles of the working class in Tunisia and Egypt two years ago. These sham left-wing forces have forged political alliances with US imperialism and reactionary elements in the region in order to prevent the spread of revolution based on an independent socialist perspective.

The Muslim Brotherhood is not only the pro-Western opposition’s most important political force in the in the war against Syria; it is also responsible for acts of brutal violence designed to suppress the strikes and protests of revolutionary workers in Tunisia and Egypt, where it governs with the support of the imperialist powers.



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