

European election: Hessian Rundfunk interviews PSG candidate

Our correspondents
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The Socialist Equality Party (Partei für Soziale Gleichheit, PSG) has concentrated its European election campaign on the threat of war in Eastern Europe. It has campaigned against the revival of German militarism with street meetings, information stands and election posters. Last Monday, PSG members raised those issues at an information stand in the working class neighborhood of Gallus in the city of Frankfurt-Main.

A team of reporters from Hessian Rundfunk visited the information stand to conduct an interview with the PSG local candidate, Helmut Arens. The interview will be broadcast in the coming days in a program devoted to the campaigns of smaller parties in the election.

“The main issue in this election is the danger of war,” Arens said. “The Socialist Equality Party is the only party to clearly identify who is responsible for the crisis in Ukraine. It is not the work of Putin but rather American and German imperialism.”

Arens drew attention to the new German foreign policy advocated by Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen and President Joachim Gauck at the Munich Security Conference held in January. “They are now demanding that Germany stop playing the role of bystander and be prepared to intervene militarily. The threat of war in the Ukraine a few weeks later was a result of this change of course.”

When asked what the Socialist Equality Party would do if it were elected to the European Parliament, Arens said: “The key question is what the working class does. We are convinced that only the working class can stop war by struggling against capitalism—the root cause of war.”

He continued: “We provide the working class with a revolutionary socialist program for the fight against

capitalism. Both the First and Second World Wars were a result of capitalism. The Second World War came about not because Hitler represented evil incarnate but because he articulated the interests of German imperialism. And today the situation is no different. The working class has to be clear on this.”

To the question the HR reporter asked, “How do you rate the policy of the European Union on the issue of war or peace,” Arens replied: “I fail to see any sort of peace policy by the EU. Regarding preparations for war, the EU is in the same boat as the US, with Germany in the front line. They have all deliberately provoked the current crisis in Ukraine. Their ultimate goal is Russia, which they are seeking to reduce to the status of a semi-colonial country.”

Arens pointed out that on the day before, Sunday, May 4, the International Committee of the Fourth International had organized the first international Internet May Day. Workers and young people from 84 countries and six continents took part online. Arens stressed that the perspective of the Fourth International, and its German section, the PSG, was to unite the working class worldwide.

Several workers and students who passed by, stopped to participate in the discussions about the danger of war and report on their experiences with the media propaganda.

Melanie, a student from Darmstadt, said, “It’s too bad that Germany supports such a right-wing government in Ukraine, and that media reports are so false”. She reported that she knew people in Kiev who were strongly opposed the new regime but were unable to get a hearing. “Their opinions and videos have been systematically deleted from the Internet,” she added.

She was surprised there was a party capable of giving a truthful account of what was taking place. “There is

not a single news channel that has reported the truth about what is taking place in Ukraine,” Melanie continued. “It is sad that politicians are able to influence the media and spread such lies. The regime that came to power in February has been supported from the outset by the US and the EU. It was simply appointed, not elected.”

Melanie reported what she had heard from her friends in Kiev: “People are afraid of what the EU will demand. The prices of food and drugs are to be increased, then people will have to go without the necessities of life if they cannot pay the impossible prices. I know many people who are even afraid to go out on the streets. Some went to Odessa, but then the fighting broke out. There are vicious fascists at work, which is all kept quiet about here.”

Hasan, a Kurdish worker, said: “In my opinion the threat of war comes from America and not Putin.” He added that Putin is pursuing his own, pro-Russian interests but, “The aggression stems from NATO, from Germany, England and America. The conflict is being carried out to further capitalist interests, which is extremely dangerous.”

Hassan had undergone his own experiences of war in Kurdistan and declared, “It is poor people who pay the price, they starve. When weapons are purchased, then the people starve. We workers must stick together. That is the only way to prevent a new war.”



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