

# German Left Party declares its support for Syriza's Alexis Tsipras

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Germany's Left Party has declared its unconditional support for incumbent Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras ahead of parliamentary elections scheduled for next month.

"The Left Party in Germany supports Alexis Tsipras with all our strength in his struggle to win a majority once again for a left government in Greece," declared the party's two leaders, Katja Kipping and Bernd Riexinger, and parliamentary group leader Gregor Gysi in a statement released Friday. "The Left Party stands in solidarity with Alexis Tsipras in Germany and Europe."

The statement went on to declare, "Syriza and its brave struggle continue to throw a spanner in the works of the neoliberal destruction of the European idea, which is chiefly being driven by the German government." Only a strong, left government offers the "resistance that could extract some social flexibility from the European blackmail bailout, make the rich pay their fair share, tackle corruption and tax evasion, and secure the economic and social development of the country within the euro zone—which the vast majority of Greeks want."

This turns reality on its head. Tsipras's election campaign is not directed against the brutal austerity measures imposed on Greece by the German government and the "institutions". Tsipras resigned and forced new elections to obtain a more stable parliamentary majority to implement the austerity package. He is no opponent of "neoliberal destruction," but the means through which the policies of the banks will be implemented.

This basic political fact has been openly acknowledged by the conservative German press. As the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* commented in an article headlined "Alexis Tsipras

sheds his skin", "Tsipras has confirmed it; he will not oppose the reform package this time... a vote for Tsipras will be a vote for deep-going changes in the state and society. That is what he is campaigning for, that's why he is entering the election campaign."

Tsipras had achieved some concessions for his clientele in the state, according to the article. "But the rest of the election manifesto and programme for government that Syriza is campaigning for among the population was written by the 'institutions'—the EU Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund."

The *Süddeutsche Zeitung* commented that Tsipras "may be a left, but he is also Merkel and Schäuble's left."

The denial of the obvious by the Left Party, and its support for Tsipras, reveal a great deal about the party's political character. Many who were deceived by Tsipras's election promises in January were disgusted with his U-turn. But not the Left Party. It has responded by redoubling its support for him.

The Left Party's attitude toward Tsipras shows that despite its occasional criticisms of the policies of Merkel and Schäuble, it agrees with them. It is not only Tsipras who is "Merkel and Schäuble's left," but also the Left Party that supports him. Should it ever form a government in Germany, it would behave like Tsipras. Its election promises of yesterday would be pure rhetoric, and it would bow to the dictates of the financial markets.

The Left Party and its predecessor (Party of Democratic Socialism, PDS) have already demonstrated this in several eastern German state governments. Its policies are not fundamentally different from those of the other bourgeois parties. It supports the debt ceiling, which prevents state

governments from taking on any new debts, and it has implemented austerity policies targeting the weakest in society. In Berlin, for 10 years the coalition between the Social Democrats and PDS/Left Party has led the way nationally in the destruction of public sector jobs and wages.

The Left Party does not represent the interests of the working class and youth. It speaks for privileged sections of the middle class, state officials and trade union bureaucrats whose positions are dependent on the maintenance of the capitalist system. The clearer it becomes that the capitalist profit system is incompatible with the basic requirements of the vast majority of the population, the further the party moves to the right.

The only things “left” about the Left Party are its phrases. The latest developments in Greece underscore its capacity to cover up the most reactionary policies with left rhetoric. This serves only to spread confusion, disorient the working class and lead them into a blind alley.

The WSWS warned from the outset that Syriza was a bourgeois party that would defend capitalism by any means. This has been fully confirmed. It is necessary to draw the political conclusions. The working class can only defend its social and political rights if it constructs its own independent party and takes up the struggle for an internationalist and socialist programme.



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