

Thousands support SGP's lawsuit against the German secret service

Our reporters

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In order to win the lawsuit against the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the federal government, and to defend democratic rights, we need your support. The SGP has established a legal fund of 20,000 euros. Donate as much as possible today and discuss the importance of the SGP's lawsuit with friends, family and colleagues. Send us more support photos and statements which we will post on the World Socialist Web Site. (Download and print the poster used in the photos below.)

With the lawsuit filed by the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) against the Federal Republic of Germany set to be heard in court in the coming days, thousands of workers and young people have expressed their support for the SGP's case and its fight to defend democratic rights. An online petition demanding an immediate end to "intelligence surveillance and the defamation of the SGP and all other socialist groups" has now been signed by more than 5,300 people.

The petition, addressed to the Administrative Court in Berlin where the case is being heard, condemns the criminalization of the SGP on the basis of its socialist program and concludes:

Such prosecution of beliefs or opinions (Gesinnungsjustiz) constitutes a fundamental attack on basic democratic rights. It can easily be used to crack down on anyone fighting social inequality, environmental destruction, state repression, militarism, or other ills of capitalist society.

In addition to 4,950 signatures from German-speaking countries, the party has received significant messages from dozens of countries worldwide. Many supporters express horror that in the midst of the worldwide wave of mass deaths from the coronavirus pandemic, the only party that has opposed the murderous herd immunity policies of the federal and state governments from the beginning is to be declared unconstitutional.

"I signed the SGP petition," explains Silke Aretz, a founding member of the Households at Risk Initiative, in a post on Twitter. "Just because a party is against capitalism, it is not left-wing extremist. Socialism must be a democratically electable option!" Silke has played an important role in organizing parents' resistance and in fighting for safe education since the beginning of the pandemic. Messaging the *World Socialist Web Site*, she adds, "I hope the trial is successful!"

Claudia, who lives with her children in Passau, Germany, is a member of the Safe Education Action Committee Network and is also fighting for an immediate end to the policy of deliberate mass infection. Under the catchphrase #schattenfamilien (#shadowfamilies), she is calling for an end to the criminalization of particularly vulnerable families for whom in-person school attendance during the pandemic poses a daily and immediate threat. She also speaks for hundreds of thousands who have lost loved ones in their circle of friends and relatives to COVID-19:

It is absolutely inconceivable that a party which is committed to the safety and protection of our children from infection is being controlled by the secret service. What other party has the protection of families with pre-existing conditions or disabilities in mind? Other political parties generally neglect these families, which means discrimination and stigmatization for those affected!

The SGP is the only party that has stood together with parents, children and teachers and has fought with #schattenfamilien so they don't get lost in the pandemic! Democracy is also about putting these families first and protecting them!

"It's scary that just criticizing militarism is justification enough to be surveilled by the 'Verfassungsschutz,' [Office for the Protection of the Constitution, as the secret service is called]" says Laura, a supporter of the party who attends a vocational school in Saxony-Anhalt:

The surveillance is being justified by accusing us of holding anti-democratic views—without any concrete grounds. However, while saying that our opinions, which yes, include strong criticism of the social system and the government, are not forbidden.

But this criticism alone—especially of capitalism—makes the SGP a 'left-wing extremist' organization, according to the Verfassungsschutz. In its eyes, you are already considered unconstitutional if you feel attracted to socialism. This attempt to restrict the democratic rights of left-wing groups and organizations or to ban these groups must not happen. It is an unfounded attack on our human rights.

"The state is the instrument of the ruling class to secure its power," Daniel, who studies in Hesse, wrote on Instagram:

As an instrument of the bourgeoisie, it fights everything that challenges the rule of the capitalist class, including your party. I'm not a Trotskyist, but as victims of state repression, you have my full solidarity.

Marco, who works in Bavaria as a care worker, has previously told the *World Socialist Web Site* about the murderous consequences of COVID-19 in homes for the disabled, wrote to us:

A democracy must uphold the freedom of dissenters as long as they are democratic and respect human dignity. I condemn

surveilling a party that advocates an egalitarian society: a society in which money cannot be used to gain influence in politics—as it seems to be at the moment due to the enormous power of lobby groups—but in which the voice of each individual weighs equally.

In my opinion, this is a good interpretation of democracy, which certainly should not contradict the constitution of the Federal Republic. Given the politics of mass contagion, I find it questionable that the Supreme Court does not intervene while the highest fundamental right—the right to physical inviolability—is not defended.

Under these conditions, the ruling class fears that the SGP's socialist perspective is rapidly gaining influence, explains Andi, a young automotive technician who lives in Munich and is fighting to build independent rank-and-file committees in the industry:

It speaks volumes when a party is included in the secret service annual report that speaks out against social inequality, poverty, unemployment, war, fascism and global warming—all mass social problems caused by capitalism. It is happening at a time when murderous “profits before lives” policies are being enforced in the coronavirus pandemic and social conflicts are intensifying and expanding internationally.

This is particularly evident in the global strikes in the auto industry. Massive job cuts are planned there in order to secure and expand profits on the backs of the workforce. To combat the growing social tensions, the government is banning and monitoring every independent voice and party that expresses and channels this sentiment. Because the political struggle must be independent of all establishment parties and unions!

Daniel from Dresden wrote with regard to the persecution of socialists and war opponents under the Nazi dictatorship:

I support the SGP's lawsuit against the Verfassungsschutz because I want to defend basic democratic rights. The accusations against the SGP prepare a very dangerous basis on which any socialist and anti-capitalist sentiment can become punishable. I don't want to see any Gesinnungsjustiz in the future, as it happened in the Third Reich.

The overwhelming opposition to arbitrary powers, dictatorship and fascism that exists among workers and young people, especially in Germany, is expressed by many other messages received by the *World Socialist Web Site*.

Joshua, who is a member of International Youth and Students for Social Equality in Germany, said:

The surveillance of the SGP by the Verfassungsschutz due to its tireless struggle against militarism, war and fascism is a clear expression of the rightward shift of the ruling elite. Ten years after it came out that the Verfassungsschutz had closely collaborated with the [neo-Nazi] NSU, all forces resisting it are to be criminalized. The SGP is only the beginning. It will soon be followed by artists who speak out against Nazis, or publishers who print works by Marx and Engels. The SGP is the only force that

has been fighting continuously for two years against the murderous coronavirus policy of the ruling class and opposing it with a scientific-socialist perspective!

The assault on the SGP is the beginning of a general attack on all democratic rights. Everyone who defends these must also defend the SGP and should sign this petition!

Harvey Lichtman, from New York declared:

As a retired teacher in New York City, I oppose the attack on the SGP as an attack on the entire working class. For the awareness that we must and can oppose capitalism with a socialist alternative is the key to ending our exploitation, the pandemic, social inequality, war, climate change, and in this case especially, the pursuit of fascist dictatorship.

Miriam, from Bavaria, explained:

I learned about the SGP lawsuit through my son. I find it completely illegitimate that the SGP is classified as ‘left-wing extremist’ and monitored by the Verfassungsschutz. The party is neither violent nor does it call on others to commit violence. I am not a member of the SGP, but I find their criticism of capitalism and their politics, especially in the pandemic, more than comprehensible. With these anti-democratic methods, reminiscent of the darkest chapters of German history, the Verfassungsschutz itself is abandoning the constitution it claims to protect. As an upstanding democrat, I defend the SGP!

Chase Lawrence, from Texas, wrote:

Spread the message: Hands off the SGP! As a member of the SEP, the SGP's sister party in the US, I oppose the attacks by the BfV to criminalize the SGP. This must be opposed by workers and youth internationally; the criminalization of socialist politics in Germany takes place just as German imperialism is reviving militarism and fascism, and as it and world imperialism barrel towards a nuclear world war which poses an existential threat to humanity. Socialist ideas must be heard by the working class, by the youth, these are the weapons against fascism and war, and against capitalism, their root cause. This is why the ruling class seeks to silence it, it fears above all a working class armed with socialism, which is precisely what we need!



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