

UK Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee denounces court ruling upholding designation of Germany's Socialist Equality Party as ‘left wing extremists’

Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee (UK)
24 November 2021

The Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee (UK) passed a resolution Monday condemning the ruling of the Berlin Administrative Court, which on November 18, 2021 upheld the designation of the German security service of the German section of the ICFI, the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP) as “left wing extremists”.

The ruling is being appealed by the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei. The court’s decision is a flagrant attack on democratic rights and stands in the tradition of National Socialist ideological jurisprudence (Gesinnungsjustiz) and Bismarck’s anti-socialist laws. It paves the way for the surveillance and suppression of all opposition to capitalism and arbitrary state power.

In court the SGP was represented by party chairman Ulrich Rippert, his deputy Christoph Vandreier and lawyer Dr. Peer Stolle. They defended the goals and the programme of the SGP during the more than two hours of proceedings. Rippert emphasised that basic democratic rights in Germany had been fought for by the Marxist labour movement and that the SGP was striving to expand democracy, especially to economic affairs.

Prior to Judge Wilfried Peters upholding the anti-democratic designation of the SGP, Vandreier warned that a decision in favour of the secret service and its anti-democratic arguments would have far-reaching consequences. He told the court, “Seventy-six years after the end of the Nazi regime, socialist ideas would again be declared unconstitutional. This would create the basis for the secret service surveillance and ostracism of bookshops that offer Marxist literature,

critical scholars, and striking workers. It would be a step toward a police state.”

Vandreier’s initial statement to the court, which dealt with the historical and current political background of the lawsuit, can be read here .

The resolution passed by the Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee (UK) reads:

This meeting of the Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee (UK) condemns the ruling of the Berlin Administrative Court which upholds the right of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and the federal government to designate the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party-SGP), the German section of the ICFI, as “left wing extremists” and to keep its members and activities under surveillance.

The ruling is undemocratic and can easily be used to crack down on anyone fighting social inequality, environmental destruction, state repression, militarism, or other ills of capitalist society.

This is happening at a time when murderous “profits before lives” pandemic policies are being enforced across Europe and the world and social conflicts are intensifying and expanding internationally. That the SGP, which, along with its sister organisations worldwide, is committed to the safety and protection of workers and children from infection, is being monitored by the secret service is outrageous.

Whilst right-wing extremists, supporters of herd immunity, eugenics and other reactionary policies, are being funded and promoted by governments the world over, workers and parents who want to protect their

colleagues and children are threatened with the sack, fines and imprisonment. The decision of the German court is driven by the fear that mass social opposition to the handling of the pandemic will find a positive and progressive outlet.

This is an international phenomenon and has already impacted on teachers and students in the UK.

Last October in Britain, the Department for Education (DfE) issued guidance describing anti-capitalism as an “extreme political stance,” equivalent to anti-Semitism and terrorism. After widespread criticism of its proposals by educators, the DfE issued further guidance that changed nothing. This catch-all guidance declares that the veto applies to resources “produced by organisations that take extreme political stances on matters. This is the case even if the material itself is not extreme, as the use of it could imply endorsement or support of the organisation.”

Efforts to silence all critics of capitalism at this critical juncture threaten a police state and must be systematically opposed and exposed.

We applaud the SGP for its brave and principled stand and will continue to lend our support to your efforts to overturn this draconian ruling.

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Among those supporting the Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee was Martin, who commented, “The main thing for me is the correlation between today and the attacks on any political dissent in 1930s Germany. I’m sure that this will not be lost on a thoughtful person. I would suggest that the anti-democratic attack on the SGP is not dissimilar to the 10-year vendetta against Julian Assange and others.

“The implications for the masses are clear, do as you are told, do not challenge anything or you will be dealt with.”

Socialist Equality Party supporter and Committee member Jude Jackson said, “The Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz, secret service) in Germany, seeks to criminalise as ‘extremist’, and place under surveillance the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party), the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International.

“The SGP, and its sister parties across the world are

the only socialist organisations that represent the genuine voice and the interests of the international working class and have rigorously upheld for decades the fundamental principles of Marxism in the struggles for the liberation of the workers of the world from inequality, exploitation, and wars of mass destruction.

“The actions of the Verfassungsschutz do not represent the interests of workers in Germany, or anywhere else. They are an anti-democratic expression of their great fear of their own citizens, and a recognition that history has an appointment with the objective reality that capitalism and its rotten institutions have come to the end of the road and have no progressive role to play in the future. The attempt to suppress socialism, and even thinking about socialist ideals is anti-human and anti-life, and must be opposed by all workers who seek to build a humane, egalitarian and democratic world.”

The Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee urges all educators, parents and students to oppose the ruling of the Berlin Administrative Court and to send in statements of protests. Please send correspondence here.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact