

UK workers oppose Facebook's censoring of German Socialist Equality Party's anti-war video

Our reporters
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Readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* in the UK have expressed their condemnation of Facebook's censorship of the anti-war video "No Third World War! Against the Ukraine war, NATO aggression and German rearmament!"

The video, which had been viewed by 20,000 within a short space of time, was deleted by Facebook last Saturday. Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) chairman Christoph Vandreier said, "This censorship is not only directed against us, but against the mass opposition to a world war." The socialist anti-war perspective of the SGP "is to be banned and censored in the midst of deafening war propaganda for a third world war."

Hours after the SGP video was deleted, YouTube erased six years of the *On Contact* programme hosted by Chris Hedges, a well-known opponent of NATO warmongering.

Facebook's political censorship of the SGP video met with strong condemnation from workers and young people in Germany. The WSWS has now received protest messages from several readers in Britain.

Jude Jackson wrote, "The US and NATO are intent upon bombarding us with their propaganda narrative through their own media outlets."

War served no purpose for workers, she continued. "On the contrary, public monies are diverted from essential services such as health and education, and are ploughed into the war machine, enriching investors, stock companies and companies that produce the machinery of death and destruction."

Pointing to the criminal herd immunity policies of the Johnson government, Jude said "COVID-19 is being allowed to spread, and health systems are collapsing

under the unrelenting pressure of sick people and staff. Facebook, through its censorship, has picked the side of death and destruction. This is a criminal act and must be vigorously opposed! No to war! No to censorship!"

Software Developer **Ben Roch** wrote saying the video by the German section of the Fourth International, calling on the working class to take up the fight against capitalism to stop the drive to #WorldWarIII, was "extremely informative. That is why Facebook censored it after 20,000 views. Watch and spread it on as many media platforms as you can! Build a Facebook Workers Rank-and-File Committee, for the defence of truth and the saving of humankind from #nuclear #apocalypse!"

Mental health worker **James Crump** said the censorship was "deplorable but unsurprising". This deletion, "linked to government efforts to suppress and criminalize dissent, is an attempt to utilize censorship to control the information the public receives about the proxy war waged in Ukraine between the US/NATO and Russia."

In the absence of such a principled anti-war perspective as argued for in the video, "people will be more susceptible to being manipulated by the pro-NATO war propaganda that is being relentlessly churned out by politicians and corporate media outlets. That is why this blatant act of political censorship must be unequivocally opposed by all opponents of the US/NATO war drive."

Maxine Walker said there had been "a grotesque disinformation and censorship campaign by the US, Britain and NATO" in relation to the war in Ukraine, on a scale never before witnessed. "They have to shout loud, lie and censor to disguise the blood-soaked

history of imperialist NATO and particularly the US history of coups and interference in Ukraine now expanded to include regime-change in Russia.”

Maxine said it was vital that opposition and socialist voices were heard. “Otherwise, people may be led blindly into a world war that threatens humanity and all life with destruction. Therefore, all socialists and those that believe in democracy should condemn Facebook’s censorship of the video ‘No Third World War’ produced by the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei.”

Dr. Chris Porter, a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University, noted that the video contained “a truthful, well researched and politically engaged perspective on a matter of vital public interest, nationally and internationally.”

It was not for the owners or administrators of online platforms to “determine, based on political or economic interests, whether or not such content is appropriate for hosting. Such acts of political censorship call into more urgent question the issue of private ownership and control of such important means of public information.”

Jo Marsh, a teacher from London, wrote, “Facebook’s taking down of the SGP’s video opposing war is an unacceptable act of censorship which must be opposed at all costs. The WSWS provides a lone voice against the pro-war propaganda in the majority of the world’s media and, as such, must be defended by all conscious workers and youth. There is a real and present danger that this conflict could escalate into a nuclear war which would signify the end of humanity as we know it.”

Jan Knott, an electrician from Surrey, said, “It’s clear that the Ukraine crisis is being used by governments and media owners to step up their suppression of anyone who is opposed to war and capitalism. We know the SGP has been top of the watch list of the German intelligence services for several years. They hate the socialist ideas of the SGP and *World Socialist Web Site* and fear their growing support. I am certain the German state fingered the SGP to Facebook, although I suspect Facebook has long had its own watch list of anti-capitalist organisations.”

Charles Birch, an office worker, said, “The censoring by Facebook of the anti-war video produced by the SGP, the deletion of the work of journalists critical of US-led wars such as Chris Hedges and the

imprisonment and torture of journalist Julian Assange, are all part of the antidemocratic and authoritarian measures being used by the state and big tech to silence opponents of war. This censorship must be opposed. We need freedom of speech to cut through the pro-war propaganda.”

Jerome Stern from east London wrote, “I wish to protest in the strongest possible terms at the removal of the SGP anti-war video from Facebook. This is an outrageous act of censorship. Nothing said in that video can be reasonably described as misinformation. It is an assessment of the part played by NATO in European power politics in general and its contribution to developments in Ukraine leading to the current crisis. It is based on factual evidence presented in the video.

“The assessment involves interpretation of the significance of those facts and hence opinions but these are not in contradiction to known facts and so do not constitute misinformation. Rather the video seems to have been censored because it presents a narrative different from that endorsed by western governments, led by the United States. Freedom of speech, and of the press, is necessary to democratic government precisely because debate of ideas critical of prevailing orthodoxies is essential if democracy is to work in the service of the common good. Thus, censorship such as this is an attack on democracy itself.”

Jonathan Hall, a retired professor from London, wrote, “Facebook’s deletion of the SGP’s anti-war video is clearly an abuse of power by a global capitalist cartel and should be opposed by everyone in favour of free speech. This is especially important when the overwhelming power of pro-war propaganda threatens to bring about catastrophic consequences”.

We urge our readers to write further statements denouncing Facebook’s censorship under the hashtags #StopCensoringSocialism and #DefendSGP and to disseminate the censored video and WSWS articles on the topic as widely as possible.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact