

SGP election statement for 2023 Berlin state election: Vote against war! Vote SGP!

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
20 December 2022

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) is turning the repeat of the Berlin election into a referendum against the policies of war and social devastation being ruthlessly pushed at the federal and state levels. A vote for the SGP is a vote against the war parties and for a socialist perspective that puts the needs of the people before the interests of profit.

The Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Left Party have no popular mandate for their right-wing and militarist policies. Voters did not cast their ballot to let German tanks roll against Russia again 77 years after the end of World War II, to triple the arms budget with the 100 billion euro special fund and to equip Germany to become the largest military power on the continent.

Nor did they vote to pass the costs of this madness onto working people. The economic war against Russia is causing prices to skyrocket and real wages to shrink, while the super-rich pocket billion-dollar giveaways and companies close plants and carry out mass layoffs. Health, social care and education are being cut and the climate destroyed to finance the elites' great power military plans.

A socialist perspective against a third world war

Especially in Berlin, everyone knows where this escalation leads. It begins with war propaganda and stepping up rearmament and ends in total catastrophe. Eighty years ago the ruling class laid all Europe in ruins; now, the nuclear annihilation of the entire planet is threatened. Nevertheless, NATO is ruthlessly pushing ahead with the confrontation with Russia. It is flooding Ukraine with weaponry and ammunition, moving troops and heavy war equipment to Eastern Europe and boycotting any approach to a peaceful solution.

It is not about “freedom” and “democracy” in Ukraine, but as in the wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, it is about raw materials, markets, cheap labour and world power. The US, Germany and the other NATO powers want to control Ukraine and subjugate Russia in order to plunder its vast mineral

resources and prepare for war against China.

As in the two world wars of the 20th century, the imperialist powers are fighting to redivide the globe. In this, the leading NATO powers are not eternal allies but competing predators. The old enmities—especially the conflict between the US and Germany—will inevitably erupt again in the process.

If not stopped, the war will escalate into a global catastrophe dwarfing the barbarism of the past. Germany's ruling class, which committed the worst historical crimes with the Holocaust and the war of extermination in the East, is using the Ukrainian war to revive militarism both at home and abroad.

Along with the war, the fascist filth also returns. In Ukraine, NATO is arming fascist forces like the Azov Battalion. In Germany, right-wing terrorist networks reach deep into the police, the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) and the intelligence services. The *Reichsbürger* (Citizens of the Reich) group around Henry XIII Prince Reuss is just the tip of the iceberg. The fascist networks are promoted and covered up by the highest authorities. All the parties in the Bundestag (federal parliament) have helped integrate the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) into parliamentary work and realize its reactionary program of stepping up the powers of the state, the “herd immunity” policy of letting the coronavirus rip and anti-refugee agitation. With the help of the fascists, anyone who opposes the war policy and social attacks is to be intimidated.

The struggle against war must also be directed against the Putin regime. NATO provoked the war, but this does not justify Russia's military action, which is inhumane and reactionary. The Putin regime represents the interests of the Russian oligarchs, who plundered the Soviet Union's socialised property and are now outraged that the imperialist robbers want to plunder it themselves.

The war is the consequence of the dissolution of the Soviet Union by the Stalinist bureaucracy in December 1991. The introduction of capitalism did not mean the “end of history” but ushered in a new epoch of wars and revolutions.

The only social force that can prevent another world war is the international working class—that is, the vast majority of the world's population, which is now larger and more interconnected than ever before. The SGP, together with its sister parties in the Fourth International, is building a

worldwide socialist movement against war and its root cause, capitalism. War cannot be stopped without breaking the power of the banks and corporations and putting them under democratic control.

- Stop the NATO war in Ukraine! No sanctions and arms deliveries!
- Two world wars are enough! Stop the warmongers!
- 100 billion euros for kindergartens, schools and hospitals instead of armaments and war!

Social equality instead of mass layoffs and wage cuts

From this standpoint, we oppose the unprecedented social devastation being organized by all the establishment parties, by the corporations and by the trade unions.

In the federal government, the SPD, Greens and Liberal Democrats (FDP) are passing the most severe budget cuts in the history of postwar Germany, despite skyrocketing inflation. The SPD, Greens and Left Party, who govern in Berlin's state executive, have made the city the capital of poverty, unaffordable rents, ailing schools and decaying hospitals, while lining their own pockets.

The pandemic policies show the ruthlessness with which the governing parties place profit interests above human lives particularly clearly. In Germany alone, more than 160,000 people have already died, and millions are suffering the consequences of the disease.

The corporations are using the pandemic and the war to enrich themselves fabulously, to close factories and reorganize production at the expense of the workers. They are supported in this by the trade unions, who advocate war, suppress opposition to wage cuts and mass layoffs, and work closely with corporations and government.

But workers are stronger than these apparatuses, corporations, and governments. They produce all the wealth of society and keep it going under the most difficult conditions. To unleash their power, they must organize in independent rank-and-file action committees that unite workers internationally and combine the struggle for secure jobs and decent wages with the struggle against war. The SGP is therefore linking its election campaign with an offensive for such action committees. We demand:

- Life instead of profits!
- Defend all jobs! 30 percent more wages for all and automatic compensation for inflation!
- Expropriation without compensation of the rent sharks, energy corporations and war profiteers!

Workers need their own party

These demands cannot be realized by appealing to those in power, because all the capitalist parties stand behind the war and social devastation. The Greens, who speak for wealthy upper middle class layers like no other party, were pacifists as long as that was in line with German great power interests. Since they helped organized the first German war of aggression since Hitler in Yugoslavia in 1998, they have become the worst kind of militarists.

The Left Party also supports the moves towards war. Its lead candidate, Klaus Lederer, calls for arms deliveries to Ukraine and denigrates any criticism of this as "left-wing reactionary peace politics." Emerging from the Stalinist party of state in the former East Germany, this party embodies the bureaucracies' concentrated contempt for ordinary workers.

There is only one way to express opposition to militarism, fascism and war in these elections: Vote for the SGP! We are not seeking lucrative positions but are using the election and any seats we might win in the Berlin state legislature to oppose the war parties. We are warning of the enormous dangers and organizing resistance against them.

In doing so, the SGP bases itself on the perspective of international socialism. As the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, we stand in the traditions of Marxism—of August Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, of the Russian October Revolution and of Leon Trotsky's Left Opposition to Stalinism.

It is time to take action and build a new mass socialist party that will eliminate the evils of capitalism once and for all. We call on everyone who does not want to accept social inequality, the destruction of the health and education systems, and the nuclear annihilation of our planet: Share this statement as widely as possible, inform and mobilize family, friends and colleagues, support our campaign and vote SGP on February 12!



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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