Berlin state election

No tank deliveries to Ukraine! Stop the threat of a third world war!

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
8 January 2023

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) strongly condemns the delivery of German Marder infantry fighting vehicles and Patriot missile systems to Ukraine. Eighty-two years after the beginning of the German war of extermination against the Soviet Union, German tanks are again rolling against Russia. The German government is thereby risking a nuclear world war.

The deployment was prepared behind the scenes with the US and France, which are also sending tanks. It represents a massive escalation of the proxy war NATO is waging against Russia in Ukraine. Leading representatives of the German government and NATO openly state that their goal is the complete military defeat of Russia.

"Until victory, until peace returns to Europe, our support for Ukraine will not diminish," French President Macron declared on Wednesday. German Chancellor Scholz and US President Biden issued a press statement Thursday declaring "their joint determination to provide Ukraine with the necessary financial, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support for as long as necessary."

Over the New Year, German Economy Minister Robert Habeck (Green Party) proclaimed in martial tones, "Putin is losing this war on the battlefield."

The imperialist powers—above all Germany—want not peace, but war. They deliberately provoked the reactionary invasion by the Putin regime. They are blocking any peaceful solution and ruthlessly escalating the war.

Even the 36-hour ceasefire announced by President Putin over the Orthodox Christmas holiday is being denounced: "A so-called ceasefire" brings "neither freedom nor security to the people living in daily fear under Russian occupation," said German Foreign Minister Baerbock (Green Party), adding, "That is why we will continue to support the Ukrainians."

The delivery of the Marder fighting vehicles only foreshadows the delivery of heavy battle tanks. "The Marder is coming—and the call for the Leopard [tank] is getting louder," writes *Der Spiegel*. The news magazine makes no secret of the fact that the tanks are in preparation for a full-scale war offensive by the Ukrainian army against Russian forces.

It states: "Bradley and Marder are considered particularly maneuverable and defensible tracked vehicles that provide fire protection to advancing troops. Ukraine repeatedly asked for both infantry fighting vehicle models—but not only these. High on Kiev's wish list is the Leopard 2. The Ukrainians would like to use the main battle tank to retake Russian-occupied territory."

The leading warmongers in the government and the opposition are already competing in their demands for battle tanks and a broader German commitment. "We must now immediately train Ukrainian soldiers on the Marder and Leopard, because after the Marder comes the Leopard," said parliamentary Defence Committee Chairwoman Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, a member of the Liberal Democrats (FDP).

The Greens are particularly aggressive. Ukraine must be supported "with everything they need on the battlefield," Anton Hofreiter, chairman of the Bundestag Committee on European Affairs, told ARD television. He said he would "like us, as the main Leopard 2 manufacturing country, to launch a European initiative for the delivery of Leopard 2s and to look

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together with Europe at what all we can supply to Ukraine so that they can liberate the occupied territories."

He then asserted: "The more clearly we support Ukraine, and the more clearly we signal to Putin that we're not going to let up on that support, the higher the chance that this war will end."

This claim, propagated by all parties, corresponds to the propaganda of German militarism in World War I and World War II. The ruling circles of the *Kaiserreich* (Imperial Empire) and the Nazi regime also justified the mobilization of the German war machine with the cynical claim that they were striving for a quick victorious peace or "final victory." In fact, they thereby escalated and brutalized the war and sacrificed more and more human lives to the predatory interests of German imperialism.

This is what is at stake today as well. No one should be under any illusions. The ruling class will not stop at the Russian border. And despite its historical crimes, it will not shrink from again leading German soldiers to the slaughter for imperialist wars of conquest.

The official phrases about human rights and democracy are only the cover for the return of aggressive German militarism. Since reunification, the ruling class has been systematically working to organize Europe under German leadership in order to advance its geostrategic and economic interests worldwide. Germany's first combat mission after World War II, in Yugoslavia, was followed by war missions in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa.

Now it is using Russia's reactionary invasion of Ukraine as a pretext to launch the biggest rearmament since Hitler and to strike again against Russia. German imperialism is concerned not only with geostrategic interests and Russia's vast reserves of raw materials, it is also driven by the desire for retribution for its war defeats in the 20th century.

The government is escalating the war in the full knowledge that it could lead to a nuclear catastrophe. As recently as April, Scholz told *Der Spiegel*, when asked about supplying "heavy weapons," that everything had to be done "to avoid a direct military confrontation between NATO and a highly armed superpower like Russia, a nuclear power." The point, he said, was to "prevent an escalation that would lead to a third world war."

Since then, Scholz and the "traffic-light" coalition government—Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Liberal Democrats (FDP)—have continued to fuel the conflict, flooding the Ukrainian army, which is riddled with fascist forces, with weapons. Now, with the delivery of tanks, the last inhibitions are falling.

There are objective driving forces behind this warmongering. As in the 1930s, the ruling class is responding to the deep crisis of capitalism and the growing resistance to it by turning to militarism, fascism and world war.

This dangerous development must be stopped before the ruling classes plunge the world into the abyss once again.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei opposes this criminal policy. We are turning the Berlin state election into a referendum against the hated war policy and seeking to mobilize the only social force that is capable of preventing another world war—the international working class. Together with our sister parties in the Fourth International, we are building a worldwide socialist movement against war and its 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 or arms deliveries!
- Two world wars are enough! Stop the warmongers!
- 100 billion euros for kindergartens, schools and hospitals instead of armaments and war!

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