Stop the censorship of anti-war videos on TikTok!

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On Monday, TikTok deleted a viral anti-war video by the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP, Socialist Equality Party, the German section of the Fourth International) that had received over 150,000 views. The video portal cited a violation of community guidelines on "integrity and authenticity" as the reason.

In the video, the long-time chairman and SGP parliamentary candidate in the upcoming Berlin elections, Ulrich Rippert, condemns the German government's delivery of Leopard 2 main battle tanks to Ukraine and warns against an escalation toward nuclear war. NATO is waging a war against Russia and the Putin regime at the expense of the Ukrainian population, he explains, while the Putin regime is only representing the interests of the capitalist oligarchs with its reactionary invasion.

The only way to stop this madness and prevent a catastrophe is an international movement of workers against the war and its root cause, capitalism, Rippert says. For that reason, he calls on all viewers to come to the SGP rally against war on Potsdamer Platz in Berlin at 11 a.m. on February 4.

The video struck a nerve. After an SGP supporter uploaded the video on his private TikTok channel under the title "Nie wieder Krieg" ("Never again war"), it reached 150,000 plays and 10,500 likes within a few days, increasing daily. Among the nearly 1,000 comments were many positive responses and numerous pledges to attend the SGP's anti-war rally.

The SGP supporter who posted the video immediately objected to being blocked, stating that the video did not violate any of the community guidelines. As yet, he has received neither a response nor an explanation. A standard text for the deletion of a video mentions "misguidance" and a possible "disinformation campaign."

This is obviously nonsense. Blocking the video can only be understood as an act of political censorship to suppress the growing opposition in the population to the war policy of the Bundestag (German federal government) parties. The SGP condemns this brazen act of censorship in the strongest possible terms and calls on TikTok to immediately explain its actions and unblock this video. We call on all readers to reject this act of censorship and to use their channels on social media and beyond to protest against it.

In the Berlin House of Representatives elections, the SGP is the only party opposing the politics of war and rearmament. From the Left Party to the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), all established parties support Germany's military rearmament and German great-power politics in the name of the national capitalist elites. Every day they escalate the war, deliberately risking nuclear annihilation of the planet in pursuit of their imperialist goals. Now that the decision to send the Leopard 2 has been made, the delivery of fighter planes and warships is up for discussion.

This madness is rejected by the vast majority of the population, as evidenced by the popularity of SGP videos. Censorship is a desperate reaction to the fact that the war propaganda of the bourgeois media is ever less convincing, and masses of workers are looking for an independent perspective against the war. The aim of the censorship is to obstruct the SGP's election campaign, which is finding growing resonance.

This is not the first attempt by tech corporations to censor the SGP's fight against the war. Back in March 2022, Facebook deleted a popular video from the party's official page and only unblocked it after massive international protests. Before that, Google had already targeted the *World Socialist Web Site* for censorship.

The corporations are working very closely with the government on this. Under the Network Enforcement Act (Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz), the operators of social networks have been forced under severe threat of punishment to delete content en masse in pre-emptive obedience to the law.

The censorship by TikTok must be seen as part of the federal government's efforts to silence the SGP and criminalize any opposition to the war. In 2018, the German Federal Ministry of the Interior for the first time included the SGP in its annual Report on the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutzbericht) and defamed the party as contrary to the German constitution. After the SGP filed a lawsuit against this, the ministry justified the surveillance of the party by the intelligence services on the grounds that merely "arguing for a democratic, egalitarian, socialist society" and "agitating against alleged 'imperialism' and 'militarism'" were unconstitutional.

After two courts accepted this outrageous argument, last June the SGP filed an appeal with the Federal Constitutional Court. The party justified this move by stating that the government and the courts wanted to establish a precedent: "In the face of the proxy war that the German government is waging against Russia, the most extensive rearmament since Hitler, and ferocious attacks on workers through galloping inflation, wage theft and mass layoffs, the aim is to silence anyone who speaks out against this aggressive class policy or even calls it by its name."

This is confirmed by the censorship on TikTok. The ruling of the Berlin Administrative Court against the SGP had already been applied against the left-wing daily *Junge Welt*. Just at the end of January, the Tiergarten District Court sentenced peace activist Heinrich Bücker for taking a stand in a public speech against Germany's war policy in Ukraine.

The fight against the attacks on the SGP, which ultimately targets any opposition to official war policy, is therefore of utmost importance. Censorship by TikTok and the government can only be stopped by the mobilization of the international working class. Share this article and protest against the censorship on all channels. Use the hashtags #defendSGP and #StopCensoringSocialism and share the censored video .

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