

“We don't want this war!”: Participants at Berlin rally organised by SGP speak out

Our reporters
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On Saturday 4 February, the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party-SGP) held an anti-war rally on Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, Germany. More than 300 people were in attendance. Reporters from the World Socialist Web Site spoke with numerous participants before and after the rally.

Fynn, a student from Hesse, has been reading the WSWs for almost a year. He said he wants to study history in order to learn from it for the future and to eliminate the prevailing injustice in society.

To attend the rally, Fynn drove overnight to “send a message against the war,” as he said. “I just think it’s totally wrong how the politicians are currently dealing with the conflict in Ukraine. And it is a pity that there is practically no other side, that you only hear those who claim that war is necessary.”

Fynn said he hoped that the rally could help “educate people that there is another option, too, which is to stand up against the war.” He drew a connection between the danger of war and “mad policies” in every social sphere. “All this is rooted in capitalism; it amounts to exploitation, and it isn’t sustainable,” he said.

“The main thing is to make a profit,” he added. Workers are told that capitalism is the only system that works, “but at some point I doubted this lie myself and started reading my way into socialism.”

Sarah is a social education assistant and is currently undergoing further training. She said she is appalled by the escalation of the war in Ukraine. “This should not happen under any circumstances. It just scares me that many people still close their eyes, especially in such a situation. And then there’s COVID and climate change as well.”

Sarah came to the rally to get in touch with like-minded people. “That’s why I’m here today. A friend

of mine is coming,” she said. “I’m just very curious what it will be like today.”

Sarah is currently on a work experience placement in a kindergarten, where she is confronted with the consequences of the exploding cost of living.

She said she repeatedly experiences “the desperation of the parents because of money. It’s horrible to see.” The early childhood educators, however, are no different; even they can no longer make ends meet, Sarah explained.

“Everything is lacking. And you can see it too. For example, in the children’s clothing, and in part also in social behavior, because there is a lack of support, at the day care center and, of course, also from the parents. Parents simply don’t have time because they have to work,” she said. For these reasons, Sarah thought the rally was important. “We need to take a stand,” she said.

Richard is from Texas and has been studying in Berlin for three months. He came across the rally because he was looking for a workers’ party in particular. He described the endless escalation of war, no matter from which side, as “inhumane.”

“There would be so many ways to negotiate, but that won’t be done,” Richard said. “NATO has played an antagonistic role since 1991. It has expanded further and further east since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.”

Richard stressed that he is far from defending Putin and the invasion of Ukraine. “But from a geopolitical perspective, it is clear that Russia is responding to interference in its sphere of influence,” he added. This has been seen before in the context of Georgia, he noted.

When asked whether he sees a connection between war and capitalism, Richard replied, “Imperialism is

the highest stage of capitalism. And any further growth of capitalism leads to conflicts with other nations, for example, for resources and labor.”

Richard strongly condemned the fact that Germany and the other NATO powers are today supplying battle tanks to Ukraine. “These Leopard deliveries make the war a proxy war against Russia. For its part, when Russia supplies weapons to allies, such as Iran, it is always demonized. But NATO is doing the same thing.”

He pointed out that the US supports numerous dictatorships worldwide, adding: “Ukraine is completely corrupt. It is the most corrupt country in Europe, and far-right forces play a leading role in its policies. Ukrainian fascists were already involved in the Holocaust during World War II, and today these forces are trivialised there in politics and in schools.”

“War means No Future,” proclaimed the sign that **Claudius Sassini** carried at the rally. He said, “I’m not partisan in any way, but I’m against the war. Because we simply must be against war; in war there are only losers.”

Asked about his opinion on the causes of the current war in Ukraine, Claudius said that it can only be understood on the basis of its history. “As early as 2014, the Americans were active on the Maidan, and since then they have for six years ensured that a civil war prevailed.” He pointed out that the Russian-speaking minority was oppressed, and even the Russian language was banned.

Then he turned to speak about the Greens. “Normally the Greens were the anti-war party, but that has now changed,” he said. “It is shocking, in a way, how far the Greens are moving towards war and militarism today. This has been going on for a long time, but now they are the most ardent war advocates of all.” Claudius explained that the bourgeois media are no longer committed to telling the truth at all. “The media is pursuing its own goals. This omission and distortion of reality is wrong,” he remarked.

The SGP’s rally at Potsdamer Platz provided a rare opportunity for Claudius to express his opinions. “I am fundamentally against the war. And I hope that a lot of people will join us and speak out against it as well.”

Moritz works as a software developer. Asked why he had come, he replied, “Because I see that there is no other movement that seriously opposes the war. There

are others who also say they are against war or for peace. But this is then connected with the Russian perspective, i.e. with the Russian state. Or ‘peace’ is cited to justify weapons deliveries to Ukraine. Both are not effective, on the contrary.

“The more weapons you deliver to Ukraine, or the more troops you send there, the more the civilian population suffers, and they bear the least responsibility of all for the war. They’re really just cannon fodder. The Ukrainian people seem to be starting to realise this. People there will probably start to wonder: What is really happening here? For whom are they being incinerated? And that can lead to them taking up resistance there as well.”

When asked at what point he had come to the conclusion that political action is necessary, Moritz replied, “I used to be in a bourgeois party, in the Pirate Party. I’ve seen it degenerate more and more. And then came the question: Is there an alternative? There was nothing left in the bourgeois camp.

“I came across the SGP and understood that it has a completely different orientation. And that gave me hope again that you can really change something. It is said that we [must] overthrow capitalism and build socialism all over the world. This allows us to solve all the current problems. Not only the war, but also the climate crisis or the other problems that have existed for decades. Because even before the war, we still faced spending cuts for everything.”

Regarding the significance of the SGP rally, he said, “It is definitely good to send a clear signal here: We do not want war, we do not want capitalism either. We no longer want all these problems, and we will abolish capitalism so that there will never be more wars. And I think that’s a very good prospect. We need to get to the point where no one in the world can start a war anymore, because humanity has united under the socialist banner. That is why we’re standing up here.”



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