

Vote against capitalism and war! Vote Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei in the European elections!

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
6 June 2024

The Socialist Equality Party (SGP) is standing in the European elections in Germany on June 9. In recent weeks, the party has conducted an intensive election campaign against German militarism, the threat of nuclear war and the social devastation that goes hand in hand with war policies. In numerous online events, rallies and videos, it has explained the socialist perspective of an international movement of the working class against capitalism.

In addition to interventions in protests and demonstrations and an intensive street campaign, the party held several online events on the burning issues of the election: the genocide in Gaza, the NATO war against Russia and the US presidential election. It also held successful rallies on these topics, which were attended by hundreds of people.

We publish here the election statement the party issued on May 13.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) is running in the 2024 European elections to build an international movement against war, social inequality and fascism. If capitalism is not overthrown, conditions like those in Gaza threaten the whole world. We are therefore fighting for a socialist society in which the needs of working people take precedence over the drive for profits.

By supporting the terrible genocide in Gaza, all imperialist powers prove that they are prepared to commit the worst crimes in defence of their global economic interests and to subjugate the oil-rich Middle East. The Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) is being heavily fortified and prepared for an open war against Russia, which would mean the nuclear annihilation of the planet. The costs of this madness are being borne by workers through cuts in real wages and welfare provisions.

The government is reacting to the mass opposition to this pro-war policy by abolishing basic democratic rights and agitating against refugees and immigrants. In Germany, peaceful demonstrations are being attacked by the police, cultural institutions are being closed and events are banned.

This shows one thing above all: It is not possible to prevent a third world war and defend democratic rights and social achievements by appealing to governments. The interests of the vast majority can simply no longer be reconciled with the greed for profits and the imperialist appetites of the ruling class. To end war and inequality, the masses must intervene independently in the political process, break the power of the banks and corporations, and place them under democratic control.

We are fighting for this socialist programme together with our comrades in France, Britain, Turkey, Ukraine and Russia. We are building an international party that unites workers around the world in the struggle against capitalism and war: the Fourth International. We oppose the growing nationalism and the threat of war with the perspective of a United Socialist States of Europe. Register now to support our campaign!

Stop the genocide in Gaza

The radical right-wing Netanyahu government is committing a brutal genocide in Gaza, the entire population of which is being held hostage, starved and subjected to the terror of constant bombing. The Israeli army has so far killed at least 35,000 Palestinians, injured 78,000 and made the Gaza Strip uninhabitable for its more than 2 million inhabitants. Hundreds of thousands are starving, hospitals, schools and mosques have been deliberately destroyed and hundreds of journalists and aid workers have been killed. Even the International Court of Justice in The Hague has concluded that there is “plausible” evidence of genocide.

This indescribable cruelty is not simply down to the Netanyahu regime. It is the direct result of the intervention of the imperialist powers, especially Germany and the United States, which support and arm Israel. Scholz and Biden see the elimination of the Palestinians as a prerequisite for waging a much more comprehensive war against Syria and Iran, and Hezbollah in Lebanon. As in the wars of aggression against Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan, which violated international law, they are pursuing the goal of bringing the oil-rich region under their control.

The last thing that concerns them is the security of Jewish life in the region, which is itself jeopardised by this imperialist policy. It is the height of cynicism when the German government justifies its new great power policies and support for genocide with the fight against antisemitism, of all things.

It is the German ruling class that is once again taking up the fascist traditions of the Nazis, not the millions of workers and young people who are expressing solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians. It is rolling German tanks against Russia, declaring genocide to be an affair of state and arming the Bundeswehr to a level not seen since Hitler.

But this militaristic agenda of those in power is countered by a powerful international movement. Millions of people around the world have demonstrated against the genocide in Gaza in recent months, despite the propaganda in politics and the media, and have shown how strong and globally networked the working class is today. This movement must be expanded and armed with a socialist perspective. We demand:

- An immediate halt to the destruction of Gaza and the complete demobilisation of the Israeli army!
- Netanyahu, Biden, Scholz and all other war criminals must be held accountable for their war crimes!
- For the unity of Palestinian and Israeli workers in the struggle for a united, secular, and socialist state!

No third world war

The genocide in Gaza is another front in an expanding global war. In Ukraine, NATO is waging a proxy war against Russia; in the Middle East, it is targeting Iran and its allies, including Hezbollah in Lebanon; and in the vast Indo-Pacific region, the US and its allies are preparing for war against China. As in 1914 and 1939, it is about the redivision of the world among the imperialist powers.

Germany's ruling class is directly following on from its war aims in the two world wars. It wants to bring Ukraine under its control and subjugate Russia in order to appropriate the enormous natural resources in the East. Where it reduced Europe to rubble 80 years ago, it is now threatening the nuclear annihilation of the entire planet. Militarism is not only directed against Russia and China. The old enmities between the NATO powers are also resurfacing—between Germany and the US, but also within Europe. As Berlin attempts to organise Europe under its leadership, conflicts with France, Britain and Poland are also growing.

The propaganda used to justify the return of German militarism is taking on ever more absurd forms. The government's support for the genocide in Gaza shows that its talk of fighting for "freedom" and "peace" in Ukraine is mendacious through and through. While it justifies the worst Israeli war crimes in the Middle East by referring to "German responsibility" [for the Holocaust] in Ukraine it is working with the political heirs of Nazi collaborators as well as with avowed fascists and antisemites to wage war against Russia again. "German responsibility" for the 27 million murdered Soviet citizens in the Second World War is not even worth a mention.

The only legitimate conclusion that can be drawn from the Nazi war of extermination and the Holocaust, the worst crimes in human history, is this: the working class must never again allow war and fascism to prevail and must eliminate the root of this horror, capitalism, once and for all.

The fight against war must also be directed against the Putin regime. NATO provoked the war in Ukraine, but that does not justify Russia's reactionary military action. The Putin regime represents the interests of the Russian oligarchs, who plundered the social property of the Soviet Union and are now outraged that the imperialist robbers want to seize it for themselves. We demand:

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

Fascism, never again

In order to suppress the growing opposition to its hated pro-war policy, the coalition government of the Social Democrats (SPD), Liberal Democrats (FDP) and Greens is reaching for the dregs of fascism. It is agitating against refugees and immigrants in the worst possible way, abolishing basic democratic rights and establishing a veritable police state. Opposition to war and genocide is illegalised and protests and camps, even at universities, are brutally attacked.

The fascist Alternative for Germany (AfD) has been deliberately built up for this very purpose. It is not a foreign body in an otherwise healthy organism, but the worst symptom of a thoroughly sick system. All the other capitalist parties have courted it and are putting its programme into practice; they have long been preparing to accept it into government.

This is particularly evident in refugee policy. "Fortress Europe," which is being expanded further and further with metres-high walls, barbed wire

fences and inhumane detention centres at the external borders, is resulting in the death of thousands of refugees. It is a deliberate policy of murder, to deter refugees fleeing war, destruction and misery. At the same time, the establishment politicians and the media are trying to make refugees and immigrants the scapegoats for the deep social crisis.

Unlike before the Second World War, the fascist parties do not have a mass movement made up of war veterans and the lumpen petty bourgeoisie. What gives them a boost in Germany and throughout Europe, and allows them to pose as anti-establishment forces, is the complete bankruptcy of the supposed "left." The fight against the right therefore requires a fight against all bourgeois parties and the rotten capitalist system.

- Expose and smash the fascist networks in the security and state apparatus!
- Defend basic democratic rights!
- Equal rights for migrants and refugees!

For a united, socialist Europe

Every area of social life is being subordinated to the pro-war policy and the lust for profits of the wealthy. While defence spending is going through the roof, Germany's healthcare budget was already cut by two-thirds last year in the midst of the pandemic and funding for education and social services slashed. Further cuts are now being prepared. Horrendous inflation is decimating workers' wages and hundreds of thousands are losing their jobs.

Millions of people are already living in abject poverty and have to struggle every day to make ends meet. According to the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), the proportion of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in Germany has risen by 3.6 percentage points in the last three years and now stands at 20.9 percent, or 17.3 million people. The EU average is 21.7 percent. At the same time, the wealth of the super-rich is exploding. Over a million lives have been sacrificed in Europe alone during the coronavirus pandemic in order to maintain the flow of profits, while the total wealth of the five richest Germans has grown by around three quarters in the same period, from \$89 to \$155 billion!

Across Europe, resistance to social devastation is growing. The continent is experiencing an upsurge in strikes and protests. Workers in all countries are advancing similar demands and linking them to the fight against war. These struggles cannot be resolved within the national and trade union framework, through negotiations with one capitalist government or another. They require an international perspective.

The genocide in Gaza has brought millions to their feet across Europe. In London alone, millions have demonstrated against Israel's war. Hundreds of thousands also took to the streets in France, Spain and Germany. But official support for the genocide in Gaza and the repression of opposition to it show that workers cannot win their demands without toppling governments and taking power.

Trade unions play a central role in defending governments and suppressing workers' struggles. They isolate these by country and sector and enforce the cuts in real wages and dismissals against the workers. The SGP therefore supports the formation of independent rank-and-file action committees that are committed to the grassroots and unite workers across all borders in the struggle against cuts and war. These committees must take the strikes into their own hands. They must be built up as new bodies with which workers take up a political struggle for power.

Such a movement must be directed against capitalism itself. The Ukraine war shows that the peaceful unification of Europe under

capitalism is a reactionary illusion. The EU is arming itself to the teeth, waging war against Russia, supporting the genocide in Gaza and serving as an instrument for attacks on workers across the continent.

Workers must oppose the EU of the banks and corporations, mass death and war with the perspective of a United Socialist States of Europe. The war cannot be ended, human lives cannot be saved, and wages cannot be defended without breaking the power of the banks and corporations and putting them under democratic control. Instead of shooting at each other, Russian and Ukrainian workers and workers throughout Europe must fight with this perspective against the warmongers at home.

- Life instead of profits!
 - Defend all jobs! 30 percent more pay for all and automatic compensation for inflation!
 - Expropriate the rent sharks, energy companies and war profiteers without compensation!
 - Against the EU of the banks and corporations, of mass death and war! For the United Socialist States of Europe!

Workers need their own party

These demands cannot be realised by appealing to the powers that be, because all capitalist parties are behind the war and social devastation. On October 12, all members of the Bundestag (parliament), from the AfD to the Left Party, backed Israel's genocidal war against the Palestinians.

The Greens, who speak for wealthy upper-middle-class layers like no other party, were pacifists for as long as this was in line with Germany's great power interests. Since they helped organise the first German war of aggression since Hitler, against Serbia in 1999, they have become the worst militarists.

The Left Party also supports the sanctions policy against Russia and the war course. Emerging from the Stalinist state party in the former East Germany, this party epitomises the concentrated contempt of the state's repressive apparatus for ordinary workers. Wherever it holds government responsibility at state level, it implements the same reactionary policies as the other capitalist parties. Its sister parties Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain have also pushed through EU cuts and pro-war policies against massive resistance.

Sarah Wagenknecht's BSW, a split-off from the Left Party, has nothing to do with anti-militarism. It criticises the war against Russia exclusively from a nationalist point of view and holds that German-European rearmament should be organised more independently of the US. It also fully supports the genocide as an affair of state. Wagenknecht's aim is to stabilise the rotten capitalist system and channel the growing opposition to it into nationalist channels.

Only the SGP fights consistently against militarism, fascism and war. We do not strive for lucrative posts but use the European elections and any seats we might win in parliament to oppose the war parties. We warn of the enormous dangers and organise resistance against them.

In doing so, we rest on the perspective of international socialism. As the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International, we stand in the tradition of Marxism—of August Bebel, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, the Russian October Revolution and the Left Opposition of Leon Trotsky. The Left Opposition is living proof that there was a socialist alternative to Stalinism and that drawing an equals sign between Stalinism and socialism is an abominable lie.

It is time to act and build a new mass socialist party that will eliminate capitalist evils once and for all. We call on all those who do not want to accept the genocidal pro-war policy, the screaming levels of social inequality, the destruction of the health and education systems and the

destruction of our planet: Share this statement as widely as possible, come to our events and rallies, donate generously to our election campaign and actively support it, and become a member of our party!

The fight against poverty, oppression and the Third World War is the fight for socialism all over the world!



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