

Fighting against war means fighting capitalism!

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
2 October 2024

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei will distribute the following statement at the anti-war demonstration in Berlin on 3 October.

Never before has the threat of nuclear annihilation been as great as it is today. The unbridled escalation of the wars in the Middle East and Ukraine by the NATO powers must be stopped.

For months, Biden, Scholz and their allies have been crossing one red line after another. They want to provoke a reaction from Russia and Iran that will give them the pretext to intervene in the two wars with their own troops, weapons and aircraft. The same ruthlessness with which they are bombing Palestinian refugees and sending Ukrainian soldiers to the slaughter today, will be seen tomorrow when nuclear bombs rain down on Iranian and Russian cities tomorrow.

The NATO powers have spent over 200 billion euros to fuel their proxy war against Russia, and every bomb that falls on Gaza and Lebanon bears the inscription “Made in the USA.” Now no one can seriously believe that these wars are about defending democracy and freedom or protecting Jewish lives.

For over thirty years, the US has been trying to compensate for its declining weight in the world economy through military force. That is why it has intervened in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and numerous other countries, reducing them to rubble. With the current wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, it is continuing this campaign for world domination, whose central target is the emerging economic power, China. In US military circles, the question is no longer if but when it will wage a war against nuclear-armed China—the consequences of which threaten the destruction of humanity.

Once again Germany, whose hands were tied following two criminal world wars, is pursuing an imperialist war policy again. With German reunification on October 3, 1990, marked by celebrations today, Berlin returned to its

former policy of aggression. The German government is not a vassal of the US, but pursues its own economic and geo-strategic agenda—including against the United States.

Germany is the second largest arms supplier to Ukraine, after the US, and its largest financial backer. Eighty-three years after Hitler’s campaign of annihilation against the Soviet Union, German tanks are once again rolling into Russia. Germany is also playing a key role in the genocide in Gaza and the escalation of the war throughout the entire region.

To pay for the massive spending on rearmament, funds for education, housing and health are being cut to the bone and unprecedented social cutbacks carried out. At the same time, democratic rights are under fire. Demonstrations and organisations are being banned in order to suppress the enormous opposition to this war madness. This is accompanied by a horrendous witch-hunting of refugees. Of all people, the desperate human beings fleeing from NATO wars are being made scapegoats for the hated pro-war policy.

The extreme brutalisation of foreign policy is not the product of the personal failings of individual politicians, which can be corrected by pressure from the streets. This is already refuted by the fact that all the capitalist parties support rearmament and war and every media outlet is broadcasting deafening war propaganda.

It is the deep international crisis of capitalism that is driving the imperialist powers to war. Private ownership of the means of production and the nation-state system, on which capitalism is based, are incompatible with the international character of modern production, which unites millions of workers around the world in a single social process. As was the case in the world wars of the 20th century, the hunt for profits, markets and raw materials by the big corporations and banks can no longer be settled by peaceful methods. The wars in the Middle East and Ukraine are part of a global struggle for the

redivision of the world.

For Berlin and Washington, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the reintroduction of capitalism was only the start. They want to break up Russia and gain unrestricted control over its vast raw materials, the same aim pursued by Hitler in the past. That is why NATO has continued to expand eastward, until Putin responded with a reactionary and desperate attack on Ukraine. He hoped this would force NATO to the negotiating table, but instead achieved the opposite.

The only way to stop the wars and avert catastrophe is to mobilise the international working class—those who create all of society’s wealth and are hardest hit by war—against capitalism.

There is a powerful objective basis for such a movement: all around the world, protests and strikes are breaking out against mass layoffs and wage cuts, increasingly escaping the paralysing influence of the trade unions. The central task is to combine these struggles with the fight against war.

The organisers of Wednesday’s demonstration reject this perspective. Rather than building a movement against the government and its pro-war policy, they want to cover up this policy or to direct it somewhat differently. They limit themselves to placing toothless demands on the government to stop supplying weapons to Israel and Ukraine and to seek negotiations. This is equivalent to asking a wolf to become a vegetarian.

The Left Party, which is supporting the Berlin demonstration, has repeatedly supported NATO’s war against Russia. In their call for Wednesday’s demonstration, they demand “respect for international law by all” and the “withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine”—the stated goal of the NATO intervention. A year ago, all members of the Left Party in the Bundestag (parliament) voted in favour of the resolution that offered Israel “every support,” giving the green light for the genocide in Gaza and demanding more aggressive action against Iran.

Speaking alongside the representatives of the Left Party is Ralf Stegner, a member of the governing Social Democratic Party (SPD). Stegner has not only supported all the German government’s wars, but has also enthusiastically welcomed the “special fund” for the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) of over 100 billion euros.

Sahra Wagenknecht, who split from the Left Party to form the anti-immigrant BSW, also supports German militarism. She criticises the war in Ukraine not from an anti-militarist, but from a German nationalist point of

view. She believes that German imperialism should pursue its interests independently of the United States. The BSW programme explicitly demands “adequate funding” for the Bundeswehr and an “independent Europe” with a “stable security architecture.”

It is revealing that at the demonstration, Wagenknecht shared the podium with her close friend Peter Gauweiler, the far-right Christian Social Union (CSU) member of the Bundestag. In the 1990s, Gauweiler sought to block an exhibition documenting the crimes of Hitler’s army, the Wehrmacht, in World War II. He later opposed the establishment of the euro for nationalist reasons. Today he is calling for the election of the fascist presidential candidate Donald Trump in the US.

These political forces are not allies of the fight against war, but opponents. Only the independent mobilisation of the broad masses of working people around the world against capitalism can prevent a relapse into barbarism. Such a movement must be based on the following principles:

- It must be based on the working class, the social force that creates all the wealth and has to bear the full brunt of war. It must link the struggles for wages and jobs with the struggle against war.
- It must be directed against capitalism and requires a socialist perspective, because you cannot seriously fight against war without putting an end to the dictatorship of finance capital and the economic system that is the cause of militarism and war.
- It must be independent of all capitalist parties and organisations, especially those that talk peace but support the policy of war.
- It must be international, uniting workers across all borders and opposing imperialism with the enormous strength of the working class in a global struggle.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) fights for this perspective together with its sister parties of the Fourth International around the world. Discuss this perspective with us and join our party.



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