

## RT Interview with Tamino Dreisam on school strike against conscription in Germany

# IYSSE in Germany: “We do not want to die for the interests of the rich”

**Our reporters**  
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The reintroduction of conscription passed by Germany’s federal parliament, the Bundestag, marks a decisive escalation of Berlin’s pro-war policy. Under the pretext of an alleged “Russian threat,” an entire generation of young people is being prepared for a new imperialist war, while the ruling class is pushing through the largest rearmament offensive since the founding of the Federal Republic following the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. In an interview with broadcaster RT, Tamino Dreisam, spokesperson of the International Youth and Students for Socialist Equality (IYSSE) in Germany, sharply condemns this development and links the spontaneous outrage of young people with a conscious socialist and internationalist perspective.

At the centre of the new legislation was a model of military service that is officially marketed as a “modernised” and voluntary solution. In reality, however, the law provided for a “needs-based conscription,” which can be activated if recruitment targets are not met. All 18-year-old men are to be registered, medically examined and drawn into a tightly meshed military selection process. Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (Social Democratic Party, SPD) presented this as a contribution to the “defence of freedom and democracy” in a cynical propaganda offensive aimed at securing cannon fodder for NATO’s strategies.

From the outset, Dreisam placed this development in a broader historical and international context. The reintroduction of conscription “is part of a wider militarisation,” he explained, pointing out that Germany was currently carrying out “the greatest militarisation in the history of the Federal Republic.” “The federal government has openly formulated the goal of being able, within three years, to defeat Russia, a nuclear power, in a

war,” a statement Dreisam unambiguously described as “truly insane.” In doing so, he makes clear that the ruling class is not pursuing a defensive policy, but an offensive great-power strategy that objectively points toward the danger of a Third World War.

Contrary to the official narrative that rearmament serves defence, the rule of law or alleged human rights, Dreisam identified the real motives of the ruling class. “All the reasons behind this militarisation do not lie in the fight for freedom and democracy.” They were “clearly the same interests as in the last two world wars: profits and economic interests, as well as the protection of trade routes.” The unconditional support of the German government for Israel’s genocide in the Gaza demonstrated that the talk of democracy and human rights is pure hypocrisy. While Berlin helped secure the destruction of the Palestinian population militarily and diplomatically, a police state was being built up at home against opponents of war, and the state apparatus was being armed for new imperialist adventures.

Asked why not only Germany but also France, Poland, Britain and Italy are massively expanding their armies, Dreisam referred to the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist world system. “What is currently happening is the global collapse of capitalism,” he explained. “It is the same contradictions of capitalism that in the past led to two world wars: the struggle for profits and the rivalry of nation states.” By linking current war policy to the experiences of 1914 and 1939, Dreisam made clear that this is not a national aberration or the “mistakes” of individual politicians, but a historical phase in which the insolubility of the capitalist crisis is driving ruling classes worldwide toward war and reaction.

“Our perspective is an international perspective,”

Dreisam emphasised. “The IYSSE is an international movement and fights to mobilise young people and students not only in Germany against militarism, but throughout the world—in the United States, France, and also in Ukraine and Russia—in order to build a united movement against war.” In conscious opposition to all pseudo-left tendencies that tied themselves to the course being pursued by NATO or defend a national military strategy, he made clear that the working class in all countries has a common enemy: the capitalist system and its governments, whether in Berlin, Moscow, Washington or Kiev.

An important focus of the interview was the mass protests of December 5. On that day, around 55,000 school pupils took part in a nationwide school strike in more than 90 cities, protesting against the conscription law and rearmament. Dreisam rejected the claim that opinion polls show growing support for voluntary military service. “There is mass opposition in the German population and among German youth to militarism,” he explained. The school strike demonstrated how broad and deep-rooted this opposition is among young people. “Everyone in Germany knows its history, where the country has already once tried to grasp for global power,” he said, directly linking the “deep rejection of militarism” to the historical experiences of German imperialism.

This opposition was not confined to youth alone but reflected a broader mood within the working class. Dreisam reported that this rejection is evident not only in classrooms, but also in conversations with “ordinary workers on the street.” He explicitly warned against trusting opinion polls and government propaganda that seek to create the impression of approval and emphasised that the real mood is expressed in strikes, demonstrations and growing discontent. The protests of December 5 were, in this assessment, only the beginning of a broader social resistance.

As spokesperson of the IYSSE in Germany, Dreisam describes the mood among young people as unmistakable. “The mood is deeply anti-militarist, especially among young people.” There was an awareness that “We do not want to die for the interests of the rich, for profit interests. We do not want to give our lives for that.” This simple formulation clearly expresses the class line of the conflict: on the one side, a small wealthy elite that profits from wars, on the other, millions of young people who are supposed to pay the price of the crisis as soldiers, workers and unemployed.

Dreisam described the task of the IYSSE and the

Trotskyist movement associated with it not merely in reflecting the anger that already exists, but in politically clarifying and orienting it. “Our movement is fighting to link this deeply rooted anti-militarist opposition with a real understanding of what is happening—that it is not just the stupid ideas of a few politicians, but objective processes in the collapse of capitalism worldwide.” In particular, he rejected the notion of reducing the problem to changes in political personnel, the coalition government of the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats, or individual “wrong decisions.” Instead, stressing that the struggle against war must be consciously linked with the struggle against the capitalist system and for a socialist social order.

In the final part of the interview, Dreisam turned to the perspectives for the coming months and years. Militarisation was proceeding “together with mass layoffs in industry”—“every week thousands of workers are being laid off, anger is growing.” Indeed, it was becoming clearer by the day that the costs of rearmament and the pro-war policy are being paid for through social cuts, plant closures and a massive redistribution of social wealth upwards. “The central question,” he emphasised, “is whether the working class will understand that these issues are connected with militarism, with social cuts and mass layoffs, that they are connected with class rule, with capitalism.”

Dreisam summarised this perspective in a clear conclusion. “We are heading into major class battles, and the outcome will be decided in this struggle, in the building of a conscious socialist movement.” This succinctly captures the line developed by the *World Socialist Web Site* since the beginning of the new war offensive: Preventing a Third World War, rejecting the reintroduction of conscription and defending democratic and social rights are inseparably linked with building an international revolutionary leadership in the working class. The central task consists in transforming the spontaneous outrage of youth and workers against war and social cuts into a conscious, organised movement for the seizure of power by the working class and the socialist reorganisation of society.



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