

May Day 2026

German imperialism's third campaign for world domination

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11 May 2026

This speech was delivered by Christoph Vandreier, National Secretary of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Germany), at the 2026 May Day Online Rally, organized by the WSWS and the International Committee of the Fourth International.

I bring revolutionary May Day greetings here from Berlin, a city that knows bombs, that knows destruction and from which the Nazi war of extermination originated. In World War II, 70 million people lost their lives. Europe lay in ruins and workers all over the world swore: "Never again war, never again fascism!"

Yet 80 years after the Nazi leaders were sentenced to death for these crimes against peace, the United States and its allies are committing similar crimes again. The brutal war of aggression against Iran and Trump's threats to wipe out the entire country correspond to the same mentality and are likewise part of a developing world war.

This madness does not simply spring from the sick mind of the US president. This is clear from its backing by the major imperialist powers. Chancellor Merz visited the Oval Office immediately after the war began to kiss Trump's ring and back the barbaric campaign. To this day, he refuses to call the war illegal. Instead, he accuses Iran of breaking international law because it dares to defend itself against American superiority.

Merz backs the war despite its disastrous impact on Germany's economy. He seeks to avoid conflict with the US over Ukraine. Above all, however, he is attracted by Trump's fascist methods. German imperialism is once again resorting to the same means to assert its economic interests around the world.

Germany must again speak the language of power, the chancellor declares, as he sets in motion the biggest

rearmament since Hitler. As in the past, the aim is to secure raw materials, markets and labor. In order to assert itself against the USA, Germany must dominate Europe, plunder Ukraine and put Russia in its place.

It must be stated clearly: Germany has long been at war with Russia again. With the 2014 coup and the subsequent escalation, the German government systematically provoked the Russian invasion. Germany is now the largest supplier of weapons to Ukraine and has long been supplying weapons that are used to attack the Russian heartland. German tanks are rolling against Russia again.

In mid-April, Merz hosted Zelensky in Berlin and announced a new strategic partnership. Germany and Ukraine will jointly develop weapons to defeat Russia. Germany would not let up in its efforts to defend Ukraine and Russia had no chance of winning this war, said Chancellor Merz.

Shortly afterwards, Defense Minister Pistorius presented a German military strategy for the first time. It describes Russia as a central threat and announces a further extreme increase in the size of the Bundeswehr. Companies are to be shifted to a war economy and society militarized.

Germany has already invaded Russia twice, committing the worst crimes in human history. Now they are waging a third campaign, even accepting a nuclear war that would not only reduce Germany and Europe to rubble, but the whole world.

The costs of this madness are already being borne by the working class. In recent years, 250,000 jobs have already been destroyed to make Germany fit for trade war. The war against Iran is driving inflation higher and sharply cutting real wages. The German government is

announcing one austerity package after another. Next, healthcare will be massively cut in order to finance the historic rearmament.

The opposition to these attacks and to the war policy is enormous. But it finds no expression in the official establishment. There is not a single opposition vote against the war in the entire Bundestag. The fascist AfD is setting the militaristic tone, and the SPD is organizing the rearmament with technocratic cold-bloodedness. The former pacifists of the Greens have become the worst warmongers.

The Left Party supported the war credits in the Bundesrat and enabled Merz to be elected Chancellor quickly. And when the war against Iran began, Left Party leader Jan van Aken cheered the assassination of the Iranian leadership by Israeli and American bombs. With the words: “May they burn in hell.” This is the language of Trump from the mouth of a supposedly left-wing politician.

But there is one party that opposes the warmongering in Germany: the Socialist Equality Party. We say clearly: The war will not be stopped by appeals to the government, not by petitions, not by alliances with parties that will approve the war credits tomorrow. But by building a new mass movement of the working class against capitalism.

This is not an abstract formula, but the central strategic reality of our era. The working class produces all social wealth. Without them, no tank can drive, no fighter jet can fly, no ammunition transport can roll. It is an international class connected across borders by global production. And the majority rejects the war policy.

What is lacking is not the will to fight, but a revolutionary leadership and a socialist program. This is what we are fighting for together with our sister parties of the International Committee of the Fourth International.



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