

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei rally in Stuttgart: “War can only be stopped when the working class rises up”

Our reporters
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As part of the European election campaign of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP), the party organised a rally on Stuttgart’s Königstraße, a busy pedestrian zone, on Saturday, May 25, on the topic of “Stop the genocide in Gaza: Against world war and social devastation, for international socialism.” The SGP had already organised rallies in Berlin, Duisburg and Munich a few days earlier.

Around 50 people listened attentively to the speeches of two SGP European election candidates and the IYSSE spokesperson. Many took flyers and bought books from Mehring Verlag to learn about the party’s programme and history.

Marianne Arens, SGP European candidate and journalist for the *World Socialist Web Site*, addressed the recent ICJ judgement against Israel and the ICC arrest warrant against Netanyahu. She pointed out that the governments in Tel Aviv, Washington and Berlin do not respect these judgements. “In Germany, all the establishment parties, including the Left Party and the Wagenknecht Party, have sided with Israel. They have blood on their hands!” Workers must therefore organise to save the Palestinians from annihilation by the Zionist state, Arens said.

She pointed out that the same politicians who supported Israel were also supplying Ukraine with weapons—“Once again, because it is against Russia!” She spoke about the imprisonment of the courageous Trotskyist Bogdan Syrotiuk in Ukraine and said, “Ukraine is not a democracy. The Zelensky regime has arrested Bogdan Syrotiuk because he is a communist, because he is fighting for social equality and the unity of Ukrainian and Russian workers against the war. The attack on him is an attack on all of us, it is the spearhead of the reactionary state attacks on the working class. It is directed in particular against the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI).”

Arens called for the case to be publicised and for everything to be done to win Bogdan Syrotiuk’s freedom

and demanded a halt to the production and transport of weapons. “Workers are paying for this war, both with social cuts and poor wages, as well as with their lives and the lives of their children,” she said. “Here in our country, too, the daily struggle of workers against social cuts, wage theft, speedups and dismissals is closely linked to the fight against war. The question is: who benefits from war? It serves the same social layers that profit from exploitation. The war can only be stopped if the working class rises up.”

On behalf of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), Clemens Huber spoke about the police attacks on students who are currently protesting against the genocide at over 200 universities.

He reported on the brutal assault by Berlin police last Thursday against students who were protesting peacefully at Humboldt University. The pictures went around the world. Clemens said, “The capitalists will not be swayed from their course by any pressure from the population. They want to redivide the world, if there is no other way, by military means.”

That is why, as he explained, the protests against the genocide were being vilified as “antisemitic.” Clemens continued, “According to bourgeois politicians, Judaism is to be equated with Zionism: a completely untenable assertion! Thousands of our Jewish brothers and sisters around the world are taking part in the protests against genocide.”

In order to stop war and genocide, a “decisive turn to the working class is necessary,” Clemens explained. “It is the only social force on this planet that can make a difference because of its position in the capitalist system. The workers load the ships, aeroplanes and trains.” He called on all those present to set up rank-and-file action committees and join the SGP.

Finally, Karanaratnam Ratnamaheson, a member of the SGP party executive and European candidate, summarised the key issues. He drew attention to the party’s programme

and perspective, recalling that the ICFI had a “long history of defending the struggles of the Palestinian people and other oppressed masses.” In the last seven months, “articles and analyses in defence of the Palestinian people have been published daily on the *World Socialist Web Site*.” As an important step in the development of the perspective, he presented the recent book by David North, chairman of the International Editorial Board of the WSWS, *The Logic of Zionism: From Nationalist Myth to the Gaza Genocide*. He said, “These analyses expose the attempt to discredit and suppress opponents of the war as supporters of terrorism and antisemitism.”

Ratnamaheson continued, “Since the beginning of November 2023, the Israeli military has bombed and destroyed the entire Gaza Strip. Nothing is left but rubble and ashes. Thousands of civilians, including babies and children, have been murdered, and the ongoing offensive in Rafah is producing more victims every day.” He described Chancellor Olaf Scholz and his cabinet as “partners in this crime.”

He then turned to the resistance among the population and said, “Opposition to the war is deeply rooted in this country. It is well known among the general public that Germany’s ruling elite is responsible for two world wars,” adding, “The EU will also—whatever the outcome of the election—continue to aggressively expand the course of the war.” And he explained the close connection between the Gaza and Ukraine wars, as well as the capitalist interests driving the war.

“The danger of nuclear war—and thus the destruction of humanity—has never been as great as it is today,” Ratnamaheson warned. “The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei is running in the 2024 European elections to build an international movement against war, social inequality and fascism.” He also emphasised another focus of the party, namely the defence of refugees and immigrants, and concluded by explaining the party’s goal: the United Socialist States of Europe.

During the speeches, many passers-by stopped and listened, asked questions or bought Marxist literature such as *The Logic of Zionism* from the book table.

A group of young Palestinians stopped at the SGP rally on their way to a Palestine demonstration in Stuttgart. Husam, Motaz, Mahmoud, Hassen and Mohammed thought it was great that a political party in Germany was taking such a clear stand against the genocide in Gaza. They wanted to know what the SGP was proposing and asked whether the party members were German. In response to the explanation that the SGP, as part of the Fourth International, was mobilising the working class worldwide against this genocide, Mahmoud said, “This is the first time I’ve heard

of this party. I think it’s a very good idea.”

“We come from Rafah and Khan Yunis,” one of the young workers reported. “Our families live there under constant stress. People have a very hard time, they often have no food at all, not even water. It’s indescribable.” Another said, “Now they live in fear of the bombs. Rafah is being massively bombed right now. You can honestly only describe it as a catastrophe.” His friend added, “From here, from Stuttgart, it’s hard to imagine what the people there are going through.”

Husam said, “We hope for justice, that workers here will stand up for Palestine. The government here in Germany stands with Israel. But that’s not logical! They kill the children, the women. We hope that the whole world will stand up for Palestine. Germany must also understand that this is Palestine.” Motaz added, “The most important thing for us is that there is peace. That’s the most important thing, that’s what we really hope for. So that our families no longer have to tremble in fear of the bombs. That’s why it’s good that you’re standing here.”

A labourer named Veton, who works at the combined heat and power plant, also listened to the speeches with interest. “I think this is a good thing,” he said about the SGP rally. “It can make a difference. I think you have to start as early as possible. This is the future, organising as workers.” Organising is important for workers, “both in Germany and in Kosovo” (where he comes from). He said, “It has to be an international movement.”

Veton described the situation in Gaza as “very bad, very bad. In this destruction, both parties lose in the end, there is no winner.” He believed that the people there were the victims of the greater powers and that it was similar to the Balkan war. “These are conflicts between the USA and Russia. And people are being murdered for it. Many still don’t understand it.”

Among others, a young woman followed the speeches spellbound. She works in retail and reported that many colleagues in her company were also being made redundant. “Everyone who doesn’t have a permanent contract has to go,” she said. “It’s a terrible situation.”

She had thought for some time that it was important to become politically active, “I’m at the very beginning now, so I’m interested in what you say. I will definitely vote for you and also campaign for you in my family so that you become bigger and have more influence.”



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