

Oppose the far-right anti-refugee campaign in Germany! Defend refugees and democratic rights!

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
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The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) categorically rejects the anti-refugee agitation and the calls for a crackdown on asylum rights that are dominating public life in Germany in the week before the state elections in Saxony and Thuringia in eastern Germany. We appeal to workers, young people and all those who reject racism and fascism: Oppose this development! Defend refugees and democratic rights!

The claim of the federal coalition, comprising the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Liberal Democrats (FDP), that the sealing off of the borders, the reduction of resources for refugees, their deportation to Afghanistan and Syria, the furnishing of the state surveillance apparatus with new powers and similar measures serve to protect the population from terrorist attacks, is a transparent lie.

With their attacks on refugees, the government, all the establishment parties and media are pursuing quite different goals:

- They are trying to divide the working class, which is now larger and more international than ever before and is being exploited by the same corporations and financial institutions all over the world.
- They scapegoat refugees and migrants, the weakest and most disenfranchised members of society, for social ills (expensive housing, lack of daycare, teacher shortages, low wages), when in reality it is the billionaires and the gigantic expenditures for war and rearmament that are responsible. Under the Nazis, Jews were used as a lightning rod for social outrage; today it is the turn of refugees and Muslims.
- The ruling elites are building a police state and eroding fundamental democratic rights in order to suppress the growing opposition to war, social cuts and layoffs. The new Gestapo, which is emerging under the pretext of the fight against terrorist attacks, is directed against striking workers, opponents of the war and socialists.
- They are deliberately strengthening the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). All the major parties—from the Christian Democrats (CDU) to the SPD, the FDP and the Greens, to the Left Party and its split-off, the Sahra Wagenknecht

Alliance—are joining in the anti-immigrant chorus. This shows that this fascist party is not a cancer in an otherwise healthy society, but an expression of a fundamental social development. Social antagonisms and international tensions have reached such intensity that they can no longer be reconciled with democracy and peace. The maintenance of capitalist rule now requires dictatorship and war. This right-wing hysteria by all sections of the political establishment is the context in which the AfD is leading in the polls in Thuringia and polling second in Saxony.

The attack in Solingen, where a Syrian refugee allegedly killed three people with a knife and wounded eight others on Friday last week, came at just the right time for the establishment parties. Since then, they have been competing with each other in their right-wing demands and promptly implementing them. There is no other topic in the media, in the election campaign or in political debates.

CDU leader Friedrich Merz called for a complete halt to the admission of refugees from Syria and Afghanistan and the resumption of deportations to these countries, where those sent there would face death. He offered close cooperation with the SPD on this, and thus a return to the hated grand coalition that was voted out of office in 2021.

But the federal coalition government pre-empted him. The parties quickly agreed on a further tightening of the asylum law and new powers for the police and secret services. On Thursday, the SPD, Greens and FDP then agreed a whole package of tightened asylum and security laws.

Asylum seekers who do not return to the European country through which they entered will lose all benefits. Recognised refugees who visit their homeland will not be allowed to return. Refugees, including minors, who have used a knife or other weapon can be more easily expelled. The security authorities will have access to further databases and will be allowed to collect biometric data and compare it using AI.

Above all, the Greens, who had previously played the role of providing a democratic fig leaf in the coalition, have lost all inhibitions. A paper by Green deputies Irene Mihalic and Konstantin von Notz, which the parliamentary group

distributed, advocates an “about turn” in domestic policy and a “special fund for internal security” (echoing the €100 billion special fund for the Bundeswehr-Armed Forces). The paper, which advocates “zero tolerance of those who pose a threat,” states that previous policy has been “characterised by understandable but also naive wishful thinking.”

On Friday, a charter jet took off from Leipzig for Kabul for the first time since the return of the Taliban. On board were 28 refugees who had been sentenced to prison terms for various offences. They are being extradited into the hands of the Taliban. Since the German government rejects any direct contact with the regime in Kabul, the emirate of Qatar had arranged the deportation deal.

The hysteria with which the government, the establishment political parties and media have reacted to the attack in Solingen shows that they have their backs to the wall.

They know, of course, that attacking defenceless refugees does nothing to reduce the risk of terrorist attacks, which are a by-product of the brutal wars the US and its European allies have been waging in the Middle East for over 35 years.

Many Islamist groups, such as al-Qaeda or Islamic State (IS), which has claimed responsibility for the attack in Solingen, were originally set up or used by Western intelligence services for their own purposes. They continue to be manipulated by them or used by regional regimes to put their imperialist masters or their local rivals under pressure. The further the genocide in Gaza is driven and the war is extended to Lebanon and Iran, the more the breeding ground for such attacks grows.

As brutal and reprehensible as the attack in Solingen was, it is modest in comparison to the more than 40,000 Palestinians who have been killed by the Israeli army in just under a year, with the full support of the German government. Resistance to this terrible crime is growing. So is the opposition to the war in Ukraine, where Zelensky’s army, with German and NATO support, is advancing into Russian territory and risking a nuclear escalation that will also affect Germany.

This resistance is the real reason for the hysteria of those in power. Just as the US government used the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center to justify its brutal wars, the much smaller attack in Solingen is being exploited to intimidate public opinion.

The agitation against refugees and migrants serves the ruling class in all imperialist countries as a central lever of domestic political reaction. In the US, Britain, France, Italy and Japan, as well as in Germany, it is used to justify the massive expansion of the powers of the police and secret services.

It makes no significant difference whether openly right-wing politicians—Trump, Sunak, Meloni—or supposedly more moderate ones—Biden/Harris, Starmer, Scholz—are in government. In Spain and Greece, the pseudo-left parties Podemos and Syriza have taken equally brutal action against refugees. And in Thuringia, the state government, a coalition led by the Left Party and including the SPD and Greens, is

implementing the programme of the extreme right.

This alone shows that the turn by the ruling class towards anti-refugee agitation, fascism and war has deep objective causes. The world economy, which is based on the globally networked labour of billions of workers, is incompatible with the archaic capitalist social system, which rests on private property and rival nation states.

The capitalists are trying to resolve this contradiction by intensifying the exploitation of the working class and forcibly redividing the world. That is the cause of fascism and war.

The working class can solve it by uniting across all national, ethnic and linguistic borders, expropriating the big corporations and banks, placing the economy under democratic control and reorganising it on a socialist basis, according to the needs of society instead of the profit interests of the rich.

Refugees and democratic rights can only be defended within the framework of such an international socialist perspective. It would be dangerous and naive to rely on humanistic and moral appeals to those in power.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei combines the defence of refugees and democratic rights with a socialist programme that defends the social and democratic interests of all workers.

Workers who come from Germany and immigrants are not rivals for scarce housing, jobs and income. They must unite to reverse the decades-long regressive redistribution that has concentrated billions in the hands of a few dozen individuals. The enormous sums that flow into war, armament, hand-outs for the banks and corporations, and rising stock prices must be used to finance education, health care, climate protection, safe and well-paid jobs and affordable housing.

The SGP and its international sister organisations in the International Committee of the Fourth International are fighting for this perspective.



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