

In memory of Wolfgang Weber (6 June 1949 – 16 November 2024)

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei
17 November 2024

Wolfgang Weber, an outstanding fighter for Trotskyism and longtime National Committee member of the Socialist Equality Party (SGP), died last weekend. His death is an immense loss for all comrades of the SGP and the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), many of whom have worked closely with him for decades, and several for even over half a century.

Wolfgang came into contact with the Trotskyist movement as a young student in the early 1970s in Britain, where he spent several years as a visiting student. He was deeply impressed and inspired by the great strike movement of the British workers at the time and the principled struggle of the British Trotskyists under the leadership of Gerry Healy. He used his student stay to intensively study the writings of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

Back in Germany, he became a member of the BSA (Bund Sozialistischer Arbeiter), the predecessor organisation of the SGP. When asked a few years later whether he would be willing to work full-time for the party, he quit his studies without hesitation and took over the editorship of the *Neue Arbeiterpresse*, our central organ at the time, for many years.

Based on Trotsky's analysis, Wolfgang wrote many articles on the counter-revolutionary role of Stalinism. He was convinced that the struggle for socialism in the working class required a clear understanding of the emergence and development of the Stalinist bureaucracy.

When the ICFI broke in 1985/86 with the British Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), which had opportunistically degenerated and moved closer to Stalinism, Wolfgang stood steadfastly on the ICFI's side.

In the early 1990s, his book, *The GDR—40 Years of*

Stalinism: A Contribution to the History of the GDR was published (available in German only). A few years earlier, he brought together his articles on the events in Poland in the book *Solidarity in Poland 1980-81 and the Perspective of Political Revolution*. He conducted a sharp polemic against the Pabloites' betrayal of the Polish working class and also dealt with the reactionary positions of the WRP leadership.

Wolfgang played an important role in the ICFI's struggle to defend historical truth. Wolfgang seized the initiative when Robert Service's defamatory biography of Trotsky, the falsifications of which David North had extensively refuted in his book *In Defense of Leon Trotsky*, was to be published in Germany. He contacted the well-known but by then already very elderly historian Professor Hermann Weber and discussed the issues with him. His interview with Professor Weber, "Robert Service has written a diatribe, not a scientific polemic!", still impresses today.

Wolfgang persuaded twelve renowned historians to take a stand against Service's diatribe, and Suhrkamp Verlag was forced to make extensive corrections and postpone the publication for over a year.

In addition to his tireless political work, Wolfgang was very interested in cultural issues. He took every opportunity to visit the theatre or opera and also brought these questions to the attention of workers.

In recent years, he struggled with severe cancer, but remained politically active and engaged until his last breath. Just a few days ago, he chaired a study group of IYSSE members and wanted to attend a meeting of the party's national committee on the eve of his death.

Wolfgang Weber was an outstanding fighter who devoted his entire life to the service of the working class and the preparation of the socialist revolution.

Yes, we are saddened by the death of our comrade

and friend. But his unshakable confidence in the strength of the working class and the importance of Trotskyism is also an example and incentive for us.

We will soon publish a detailed appreciation of his political life. We ask you to send letters of condolence to sgp@gleichheit.de.



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