

No deployment of German troops to Ukraine! Prevent a nuclear escalation!

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The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) strongly condemns the government's plans to send German soldiers to Ukraine. 83 years after the beginning of Nazi Germany's war of annihilation against the Soviet Union, German troops are to go to war against Russia again. This is precisely the issue, regardless of how government representatives describe their plans publicly.

Last week, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock (Greens) stated on the fringes of a NATO meeting in Brussels that she could also envisage the deployment of German soldiers to "secure peace" between Ukraine and Russia. In addition to so-called "security guarantees" for Ukraine, there was also talk of an international presence to secure a ceasefire.

When asked about a possible German and European role in this, she said: "And as Europeans, we can only protect this peace together." This was "also the basic understanding of NATO." Just as Germany had "worked on this peace for more than 1,000 days," it would "naturally also support everything that serves peace in the future with all our strength."

Baerbock's statements are as absurd as they are revealing. "The basic understanding" of NATO and Germany is not peace, but war. With their decades-long encirclement of Russia, they provoked Putin's reactionary invasion of Ukraine in early 2022 and have been escalating the conflict ever since in order to defeat Russia militarily in Ukraine.

Germany is one of the most aggressive warmongers. Only at the beginning of the week, with his surprise visit to Kiev and the announcement of further arms deliveries, Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democrat, SPD) emphasised that he is not a "peace chancellor," but a war chancellor. And Baerbock herself had already openly declared at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in January 2023 that Brussels and Berlin are

warring parties. "We are fighting a war against Russia and not against each other," she stated on the record.

By calling for German troops in Ukraine, Baerbock is not simply speaking for herself, but about plans that have long been prepared behind the backs of the population. In an interview with Deutschlandfunk radio, Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (SPD) replied to the question of whether Germany, like France and the UK, should not also think concretely about "scenarios" for "ground troops in Ukraine."

"Who says we're not doing that?" He said, "only that we're not talking about it now. Thinking is something completely different. You have to think about everything. You have to be as prepared as possible for every possible situation. If that's possible, for different scenarios. But that doesn't mean that we disclose all scenarios."

Workers and young people must take this as a warning. Behind the backs of the population, the imperialist powers are working on massively intensifying the war offensive against Moscow, including the possible use of nuclear weapons. On 21 November, the *New York Times* reported that the Biden administration was discussing "allowing Ukraine to possess nuclear weapons again, as it did before the fall of the Soviet Union."

On Sunday, US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan announced that the Biden administration was planning "massive arms deliveries" to Ukraine in the seven weeks remaining until Trump takes office in order to "strengthen its position on the battlefield." On the same day, the new EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Kaja Kallas, also spoke out in favour of sending ground troops in Kiev.

There is no doubt that any initiative for a "ceasefire" by Trump and the possible deployment of European troops within this framework would only be the prelude to a further massive escalation of the war.

During the election campaign, Trump occasionally warned of the danger of a "third world war" and claimed

that he wanted to settle the conflict in Ukraine through a negotiated solution. However, this will be “among the first demagogic statements that will be jettisoned,” the WSWS warns in a recent perspective. The new administration would be “no less committed than the outgoing one to the defense of the core strategic interests of American imperialism.”

The European powers are responding by increasing their own war efforts. Following the decision to allow Kiev to attack Russia directly with American, British and French cruise missiles, the next stage of escalation is now being prepared with the discussion about the deployment of European and German ground troops.

Nobody should have any illusions about what this means. In order to prevent the complete collapse of the Ukrainian front and to assert their own imperialist interests in Ukraine and against Moscow, Germany and the leading NATO powers are preparing for a direct war against the nuclear power Russia—with all the consequences this brings.

Baerbock, Pistorius and Co. should come clean with the population during the campaign for February’s early general election and explain what their war plans mean and what dark tradition they are part of. Ukraine was already in the crosshairs of German imperialism during the First World War, and one of its war aims was to establish a vassal regime controlled by Berlin. In the Second World War, the subjugation of Ukraine was a direct part of Hitler’s war of annihilation against the Soviet Union, which cost the lives of at least 27 million Soviet citizens and led to the Holocaust.

Some of the worst crimes took place in Ukraine itself, including the Babi Yar massacre, in which German *Einsatzgruppen* brutally murdered more than 33,000 Jewish men, women and children in two days. In its renewed drive eastwards, which has at its core the same predatory goals as in the 20th century—geostrategic dominance and satiating German business’s enormous hunger for raw materials—the ruling class is working with the heirs of the Ukrainian Nazi collaborators.

In Germany itself, the deployment of the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) to Ukraine would go hand in hand with the reintroduction of conscription to provide the necessary cannon fodder for the front. And unleashing a new world war against Russia requires a massive increase in defence spending at the expense of wages and social expenditure, the development of a war economy and the establishment of a fascist police state to suppress opposition among the population.

Baerbock, Scholz, Pistorius and the other warmongers in politics and the media should also explain how many hundreds of thousands or millions of human lives they are prepared to sacrifice for a victory over the nuclear power Russia. The Kremlin has repeatedly made it clear that it will not accept Western troops in Ukraine and regards the direct intervention of the NATO powers in the conflict as an act of war that could result not only in conventional but also nuclear retaliatory strikes.

A nuclear escalation of the conflict would not only reduce Europe to rubble, but also jeopardise the survival of humanity as a whole. The only way to stop this madness is to build an international mass movement against war and its root cause, capitalism. This is precisely the significance of the election campaign being conducted by the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei.

While representatives of all the establishment parties compete with their demands for a more aggressive war course, massive social cuts, anti-refugee agitation and bolstering police state powers, we are running in the Bundestag elections to oppose this all-party coalition and to give the growing opposition among workers and young people a voice and arm them with a socialist programme.

• No third world war! Stop the NATO war in Ukraine!

- Stop the genocide in Gaza!
- Never again fascism!
- For a united, socialist Europe!

Become active now, support our election campaign and become a member of the SGP!



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