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## ***Germany's Left Party supports Israel's genocidal war on Gaza***

With its aggressive support for Israel's genocidal crackdown on Palestinians in Gaza, the Left Party underscores the fact it is a thoroughly anti-working-class and pro-imperialist force.

The bellicose statements that have come from the party leadership since the beginning of the Israeli attack on Gaza this month are in no way different from those of the federal government coalition and the openly right-wing and far-right opposition parties, the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) and Alternative for Germany (AfD).

This became particularly clear last Thursday. In a specially scheduled Bundestag (federal parliament) debate, the government and opposition closed ranks and unanimously backed the massacre by the far-right Netanyahu government and the Left Party was fully on board. A pro-Israel resolution by the governing coalition parties—Social Democrats (SPD), Liberal Democrats (FDP) and Greens—and the CDU/CSU was unanimously supported by the Left Party faction and celebrated as “Germany's contribution in the fight against terror.”

In the “debate,” Left Party members applauded frenetically for the government statement by Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) and also for the speech by right-wing opposition leader and former BlackRock supervisory board chairman Friedrich Merz (CDU). Both had backed Israel's war offensive, denounced any opposition to it as antisemitism and terrorism and called for bans on demonstrations and organizations that support the Palestinians.

The subsequent speech by Dietmar Bartsch, head of the Left Party parliamentary group, made it clear that the applause was not a slip, but in line with the Left Party's program.

Bartsch's speech was so completely in line with Scholz, Merz and Co. that he in turn received applause from the other parliamentary groups. The minutes note at several points: "Applause from the Left Party as well as from members of the SPD, the CDU/CSU, the Greens and the FDP."



Dietmar Bartsch addressing the Bundestag [Photo by Olaf Kosinsky / [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/)]

Bartsch began his speech with an unqualified declaration of solidarity for Israel and the German government's support for the war. He said that what Israel was experiencing was "hard to bear" and marked "a new, extremely worrying quality of terror." He therefore "expressly welcomes the fact that the Chancellor has issued a government statement today." It was "absolutely right that we express our solidarity with Israel. Yes, we mourn with you, with those affected; we stand by their side."

Bartsch fully backed the brutal violence of the Netanyahu regime, which is riddled with far-right forces. "Responsible for what happened—want to make that unmistakably clear—is Hamas, without ifs and buts," he declared. He could not make the class standpoint of the Left Party any clearer. Violence is perfectly legitimate, but only if it comes from the oppressors!

For the oppressed and the reasons for their rebellion, Bartsch has only contempt. He mentions the Palestinians only to insult them and to threaten them. On the other hand, he did not say a word about the fact that the imperialist-backed Zionist regime is based on the brutal expulsion and oppression of the Palestinian population, has repeatedly organized massacres in recent years and decades and has turned the Gaza Strip into a closed ghetto.

"Nothing justifies this outbreak of inhuman brutality. To publicly abuse women, children, even babies, this is not a fight for freedom, this is barbarism," he shouted to the members of the Bundestag, again earning applause from all factions. This is reminiscent of the fascist tirade of the Israeli defense minister that the Palestinians were "human animals"

and should be treated accordingly. The WSWS has pointed out in previous articles that this kind of dehumanization serves to use ever greater violence and ultimately even to commit genocide.

In the first days of the Israeli bombardment, more than 6,000 bombs were dropped on the Gaza Strip and large parts of the densely populated area were completely destroyed. More than 3,000 civilians have already been officially killed, including many women and children. On Tuesday alone, an Israeli bombing of a hospital killed over 500 people. Even greater war crimes will follow. The Israeli government has completely blockaded Gaza, cut off all energy and water supplies, and ordered the population to evacuate the northern part of Gaza. An invasion with more than 300,000 troops is imminent.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the operation is not just about the destruction of Gaza, but imperialist control of the entire Middle East. Two US aircraft carriers have been deployed in the eastern Mediterranean and the imperialist powers are preparing for an all-out war with Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Assad government in Syria and Iran. Such a war would turn the entire region into an inferno and potentially bring death to millions.

Nevertheless, Bartsch left no doubt that the Left Party also supports this escalation. It is “high time that we rethink our Iran policy,” he urged parliamentarians. “We know that Iran wants to destroy Israel, and we know that Iran is actively supporting Hamas. We have to stop exporting knowledge and technology to Iran; because the engineers behind the Hamas bombs got their know-how from Iran.”

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When the Left Party criticizes the federal government, it does so from the right. For example, in a press statement of his own, the party’s co-chairman, Martin Schirdewan, declared his “explicit support” for the government’s decision to “resolutely oppose all states that provide financial, material or non-material support to terrorist organizations such as Hamas.” Only to then add: “But it’s completely beyond me how the German government can expect anyone to take its resolutions seriously when at the same time it continues to court one of Hamas’ biggest supporters, the Emirate of Qatar, as its business partner.”

Bartsch's and Schirdewan's aggressive imperialist conduct is not an individual issue. It ultimately arises from the party's history and class character. The Left Party's Stalinist predecessor, the SED/PDS, helped organize the restoration of capitalism in East Germany, paving the way not only for massive social austerity but also for the return of German militarism. As the party of the state apparatus and wealthy middle class layers, it has long played a central role in this.

In 2013, Stefan Liebich, then the foreign policy spokesman for the Left Party, was involved in drafting the paper "New Power—New Responsibility," which formed the basis for Germany's return to an aggressive foreign and great power policy. Since then, the Left Party has supported every foreign policy aggression of German imperialism. This includes the imperialist regime-change operation in Syria, the right-wing coup in Kiev, the military campaign against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and the NATO war against Russia in Ukraine.

Support for Israel's violence and the related imperialist offensive in the Middle East are the continuation of this policy. German imperialism and its political stooges, such as the Left Party, do not want to stand aside as the resource-rich and geostrategically central Middle East is redivided.

Another factor that makes the Left Party an increasingly aggressive imperialist and capitalist force is its fear of the explosion of class struggle in Germany and internationally. "The uprising in Palestine is part of the anger and wave of resistance that is breaking out in mass strikes and protests around the world," the International Committee of the Fourth International wrote in its first statement on the uprising in Gaza. Since then, there have been mass protests worldwide against the Israeli and imperialist war campaign.

This development is feared like the plague by the Stalinist turncoats and their pseudo-left appendages—which is why they do not condemn the government's bans on demonstrations with a single word, but instead arm the state's own repressive apparatus wherever they are involved in government at the state level. Workers and youth who want to stop the massacre in Gaza and fight against oppression and war must settle accounts politically with class enemies like the Left Party and consciously turn to a socialist and revolutionary perspective. This means joining the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) and building the International Committee of the Fourth International.

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