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Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei

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The fight against fascism requires a fight against capitalism and war!



German opposition leader and Christian Union parties floor leader Friedrich Merz, center, at the German parliament Bundestag in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, January 29, 2025. [AP Photo/Markus Schreiber]

Having twice voted with the Alternative for Germany (AfD) in favor of a brutal policy of sealing the borders against refugees, the conservative Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) and Free Democratic Party (FDP) parliamentary groups in the Bundestag are prepared to accept the far-right party as a government partner.

This is the inescapable conclusion that must be drawn from the events of the past week. Anyone who adopts motions and legislation together with an extreme right-wing party is also capable of governing with it. CDU leader Friedrich Merz's assurances to the contrary, whose shelf-life is perhaps two weeks, do nothing to change this.

Eighty years after the end of the Nazi regime, the door is now wide open for the fascist AfD to move into the highest offices of government.

On Wednesday, the CDU/CSU and FDP, together with the AfD, ensured that a motion in favor of sealing off Germany's borders, largely abolishing the right to asylum, and significantly increasing the number of detention beds for those being deported gained a parliamentary majority. It was the first time in the history of the Bundestag that a large parliamentary group made common cause with fascists.

On Friday, the CDU/CSU, FDP and AfD, working together, once again sought to pass the so-called influx limitation bill. Although the Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance had also spoken in favor of the measure, the bill failed due to dissenters in its own ranks. Nevertheless, the signal was clear: The much-vaunted "firewall" against the AfD no longer exists.

Since Wednesday, tens of thousands of people have taken to the streets in numerous cities to protest. Further large demonstrations are planned for the weekend.

But how can the rise of the AfD be stopped? Appeals to the CDU and CSU will achieve as little as support from the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens or Left Party.

In fact, these parties bear a central responsibility for the rise of the AfD. The SPD and the Greens are not opposing the AfD and CDU's refugee agitation and their racist law-and-order campaign but are instead fueling it.

In October 2023, Chancellor Olaf Scholz was featured on the cover of *Der Spiegel* with the statement: "We must finally deport refugees on a large scale." The same statement could have come from the AfD.

In the Bundestag, the SPD and Greens fiercely attacked Merz for his cooperation with the AfD. But they did so solely from the standpoint that he could achieve the same goal by working with them instead of the fascists. They listed the numerous laws and measures they have adopted to keep refugees away from German and European borders. All that was missing was for them to boast about the more than 31,000 people who have drowned in the Mediterranean over the last 10 years as a result of their policy of sealing the borders.

That these parties now present themselves as the guarantors of democracy and accuse Merz of breaking a taboo is the height of hypocrisy. The SPD and Greens are themselves working with the fascists in parliamentary committees and at local and European levels.

On the same day that Merz voted with the AfD against the right to asylum, the SPD and Greens, together with the CDU, FDP and AfD, passed a so-called antisemitism resolution that relativises the Holocaust and criminalizes opponents of the genocide in Gaza!

It was the SPD and the Greens who massively rearmed the Bundeswehr and deployed German tanks against Russia, 80 years after the Nazis' war of extermination against the Soviet Union. It was the SPD and the Greens who supported the genocide in Gaza, and it was

the SPD and the Greens who effectively abolished the right to asylum! With their policies in the interests of the banks and corporations, they have produced a social catastrophe.

The AfD was deliberately built up and promoted in order to aggressively push through this policy of war and social cuts. Although it exploits social misery and despair, it is the party of German militarism and finance capital in its purest form. The AfD is calling for a five-fold increase in the war budget and a radical cut in taxes on the rich. In return, it receives millions in donations.

A similar development is taking place in other countries. Viktor Orbán in Hungary, Giorgia Meloni in Italy, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Herbert Kickl in Austria owe their rise to the same calculations of the oligarchs.

It is most evident in the US. Donald Trump is using the demonization of refugees as a lever to build a police state, deploy the military at home and mobilize a right-wing mob. Joe Biden's Democrats are not resisting this because they represent the same class interests—the interests of Wall Street and the military.

While Trump was still considered an outsider when he first won election, the richest and most powerful oligarchs are now backing him. Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, is tasked with cutting government spending by a third for Trump, i.e., slashing social spending to zero. It is no coincidence that Musk is one of the most important supporters of AfD leader Alice Weidel.

The AfD is not trivializing Hitler because it rejects the existing social order. It is trivializing Hitler because the capitalist order can only be defended using fascist methods.

This insight must form the starting point for the fight against the AfD. The SPD and Greens are absolutely right when they accuse Merz of preparing a government with the AfD. But they will—like the Democrats in the US—do everything they can to suppress opposition and preserve “order.” They share the programme of rearmament, social cuts and the establishment of a police state. The trade unions will likewise support them in this.

Resistance against the fascists can come only from the working class. It will not allow work colleagues and neighbors to be deported, their wages to be decimated, their jobs destroyed, education and health privatized and pensions and social benefits smashed. Explosive class struggles are inevitable.

These struggles must be prepared. They need a political perspective and leadership. This is what the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) is fighting for. It is the only party standing in the Bundestag elections to oppose war, rearmament and social cuts, and it defends all democratic rights, including those of migrants.

The fight against fascism requires a fight against capitalism and war!

As the German section of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), the SGP advocates the unity of the international working class in order to overthrow capitalism, expropriate the billionaires and build a socialist society in which social needs take precedence over profit interests.

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei