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Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei

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Election rerun in Berlin

## ***Stop the German government's pro-war policy and social devastation! For new nationwide elections!***

The decision of the Federal Supreme Court to order the repeat of the federal election in only a few constituencies in Berlin, despite blatant shortcomings, is a fundamental attack on democratic rights. The wider electorate are to be deprived of the opportunity to express opposition to the hated pro-war policy and the social devastation of the federal coalition government.



Demonstration in Berlin, Germany on November 4, 2023

In November 2022, the Berlin State Supreme Court found that the principles of universality, equality and freedom of the vote had been violated in the state elections in

Berlin so severely that it had an impact on the distribution of seats. The court therefore ordered a complete rerun of the Berlin state election.

The Federal Supreme Court has now overruled this and ordered the repeat of the Bundestag (federal parliament) election in Berlin, which took place on the same day (September 26, 2021) and was affected by the same shortcomings, but only for those constituencies in which particularly serious irregularities were proven. The result is a by-election in just 455 of 2,256 constituencies, which will not significantly change the composition of the Bundestag. This means that an undemocratic election has been given the highest court's blessing in retrospect.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) is nevertheless taking part in the election rerun with its own slate in order to provide a voice and a socialist perspective to the enormous opposition to the right-wing policies of the federal coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Liberal Democratic Party (FDP) and Greens. We are calling for new nationwide elections to mobilise workers across the country against the government's policies.

The election was not only illegitimate because formal mistakes were made. The federal government also has no political legitimacy for its policy of war and social devastation. The voters did not vote in favour of the genocide of the Palestinians being declared a matter of state policy nor in favour of the German government and its allies threatening to turn the entire Middle East into an inferno in order to enforce their global economic interests.

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Voters also did not vote in favour of letting German tanks roll against Russia again, 79 years after the end of the Second World War, doubling the military budget and rearming Germany to become the continent's largest military power. Having systematically provoked Russia's reactionary invasion of Ukraine, NATO is now doing everything it can to escalate the war in order to bring Ukraine under its control and subjugate Russia. In doing so, the NATO powers accept the possibility of the nuclear annihilation of the entire planet.

And the voters have certainly not voted in favour of passing the costs of this madness onto working people. Real wages have plummeted due to horrendous inflation in food, rents and energy, while the super-rich are pocketing billions and corporations are closing factories and making mass redundancies. The federal budget for 2024 provides for further massive cuts in the areas of healthcare, housing and education, while billions in subsidies for corporations and the defence department will increase immeasurably.

Military spending will increase by a further 26 percent in 2024 to over €85 billion — the highest military budget to date since the end of the Second World War. On the other hand, the healthcare budget alone has been slashed from €64 billion to €16 billion in the last two years amid the pandemic, and all infection control measures have been abolished.

This policy has rightly made the tri-partite coalition the most hated government in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. Of the 52 percent that the SPD, Greens and FDP received in the last general election, just 32 percent now support these parties according to the latest polls. For the first time, the SPD, as the party of the chancellor, may not clear the 5 percent hurdle to enter into parliament in some federal states.

Under these conditions, the Federal Supreme Court has ruled that the population has no right to general, free and fair elections. Despite the blatant electoral shortcomings, it has opted for a pure electoral farce that will not change the outcome of the illegitimate 2021 election.

This anti-democratic decision is directly linked to the widespread attacks on fundamental democratic rights. Demonstrations against the genocide in Gaza are banned or subject to comprehensive speech bans, entire neighbourhoods are placed under siege and refugees seeking protection are interned and deported en masse.

This all-out assault on fundamental rights proves that genocide, war and social devastation cannot be ended by appeals to the government or other parties represented in parliament. The political system has completely disconnected itself from the working class and the ruling class is increasingly imposing its hated policies in a dictatorial manner.

The Left Party and its Wagenknecht spin-off are also fully on the side of the government. Wherever they hold government responsibility in the federal states, they are implementing the policy of social attacks, mass deportations and stepping up the powers of the state particularly aggressively. The same applies to war policy. In the Bundestag on October 12, all Left Party deputies joined representatives of all other parties in backing the Israeli genocide.

The fascist Alternative for Germany (AfD) is the driving force behind the policy of genocide, mass deportations and armament and is being systematically courted and built up in order to intimidate the opposition and channel it into right-wing channels.

The only social force that can stop war and prevent a catastrophe is the international working class, the vast majority of the population. The global mass protests against the genocide in Gaza in recent weeks have shown how strong and how interconnected workers and young people are today. It is now important to expand the protests and build a powerful movement of the international working class. This must be armed with a socialist perspective that places the needs of the vast majority before the interests of profit; because no problem can be solved without breaking the power of the banks and corporations and placing them under democratic control.

The SGP is fighting for this perspective in the election rerun in Berlin on February 11 and in the European elections in June 2024. We are not seeking lucrative posts but use the elections and any seats in parliament we might win to oppose the pro-war parties. It is time to take action and build a new mass socialist party that will eliminate capitalist evils once and for all. We call on everyone who does not want to put up with the genocidal war policy, the screaming social inequality, the destruction of the health and education system and the destruction of our planet: Share this statement as widely as possible, support our Berlin election campaign; if you are eligible to vote, sign up today to support the participation of the SGP in the European elections, and become a member of our party!

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