

MLPD | SCHMALHORSTSTRASSE 1C | 45899 GELSENKIRCHEN | GERMANY

International Parties,
Organizations and Friends



Dear comrades, dear friends all over the world,

Sincere thanks for your solidarity messages and protest letters to the Buchenwald Memorial. Your letters made it clear that Buchenwald and the commemoration of Ernst Thälmann belong to the collective heritage of the world revolutionary movement and that we are not willing to leave the prerogative of interpretation to the anticommunists!

Consequently we would like to inform you with this letter and, in a way, account for how we defended this heritage. Our struggle was a complete success:



- In a legal tug-of-war that dragged on day and night into the early morning of the planned commemoration day in Buchenwald, we could not prevent the relocation of the commemoration ceremony of the Internationalist Alliance from Buchenwald to Weimar. However, 700 people came and, such is the dialectics of history, instead of reaching fewer people in Buchenwald we reached thousands in Weimar and met with very great sympathy and approval among the masses there. In the middle of Weimar we recalled the life of Ernst Thälmann in moving speeches by the chairman of the Thuringia branch of the MLPD, Tassilo Timm, the former long-time chairman of the MLPD, Stefan Engel, and Klaus Dimler, son of a communist imprisoned in Buchenwald who was a member of the illegal leading camp committee. In this way we reached many more people than we would have at the memorial site itself. With songs remembering Ernst Thälmann and with guided tours of a replica of the memorial in Buchenwald that had been created overnight, extensive educational work was carried out making it possible especially for the young generation of MLPD and *Rebell* to hold a memorial ceremony on the highest cultural level. Excerpts from the many international messages also were read out and generated greatest interest and enthusiasm.



- Following this, a protest demonstration (of which we notified the authorities the day before), again with hundreds of participants, led by our Party chairwoman Gabi Fechtner, marched to the central Goetheplatz. To the applause of passers-by Fechtner made it clear that we do not knuckle under to the anticommunist reorientation of the memorial sites. We do not dissociate ourselves from Stalin, under whose leadership the Red Army liberated Germany from fascism. We do not submit to the falsification of history that seeks to dismiss the communist resistance and the self-liberation of the prisoners of the Buchenwald concentration camp as a myth and so tramples on the dignity of those involved. We do not distance ourselves from the solidarity with the Palestinian liberation struggle against the oppression by the imperialist government of Israel. Whereas we condemn anti-Semitism, an often uncritical memorial year has been organized for one of the biggest anti-Semites in German history – Martin Luther. At the protest rally concluding the demonstration, among others a representative of the Communist Platform of the Left Party spoke – a good signal, because the hostile action is aimed at all progressive antifascists.



- In court we successfully asserted the right to a wreath-laying ceremony by the MLPD, in which 50 comrades, sympathizers and friends of the MLPD – especially young people and international participants – took part. We refused to tolerate the insane, unworthy, martial behavior of the police, who conducted a “check” of the participants’ “convictions” at the entrance to the memorial site on the morning of the wreath-laying ceremony. Foaming at the mouth, the anticommunists from the memorial site management had to look on as we celebrated the memory of Ernst Thälmann in a stirring and dignified way – not to preserve his ashes, but to carry on the flame of the communist ideal of freedom. You should know that the Minister of State for Culture who sits in the Federal Chancellery is a member of the Memorials Foundation. The foundation, like the management of the memorial site, is composed of reactionaries from the Christian Democrat party, CDU. Monika Gärtner-Engel, Internationalism Officer of the MLPD, found suitable ways to draw references to today, and Stefan Engel, declared persona non grata, laid the wreath with the words: *“Remembering Thälmann commits us to emulate him, his great fighting spirit and solidarity with all the world’s exploited and oppressed, his courage, his foresight, and his refusal to ever give up.”*
- Many of the participants in the Weimar events then traveled on to Erfurt, where the Internationalist List/MLPD kicked off its campaign for the state elections in Thuringia. A broad

spectrum of allies and a disciplined, highly motivated MLPD membership turned this event into fireworks against the bourgeois parties. Refreshing polemics, a colorful collection of campaigning materials from T-shirts to new posters, and an abundance of food for mind and body also delighted many Erfurters.

- The whole day long our leading comrades, threatened with death by fascists, stood at the forefront and also made this day a day of antifascist struggle.
- Last but not least, there were many reports about us in the bourgeois press on and around this day, most of them objective, mainly emphasizing the successful wreath-laying ceremony of the MLPD in Buchenwald. Even the journalists and ordinary employees of the memorial site did not fail to notice our poised and confident manner, also because we did not fall for any provocation. The memorial management with its slanderous, inflammatory, history-falsifying equation of Right and Left could not carry the day. Nevertheless, it is an important task to battle this out to the end and regain opinion leadership for proletarian antifascism in the memorials, and make it a permanent part of everyday revolutionary rank-and-file work.

Unexpectedly, this confrontation thus also became a piece in the building of an anti-imperialist and antifascist united front. We will keep you posted on the further developments!

Warm revolutionary greetings,

Monika Gärtner-Engel, Internationalism Officer of the MLPD

The events are documented on YouTube:

<https://www.mlpd.de/videos/gedenkveranstaltung-am-17-08-19-zum-75-todestag-von-ernst-thaelmann>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybE6AedafI0>

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