

# A Pyrrhic Victory for Chancellor Merkel

*Rote Fahne interview with the chairman and top candidate of the MLPD, Stefan Engel  
24 September 2013*

***Rote Fahne: The Chancellor wins the elections, a victory of conservatism?***

With 41.5 percent and 7.8 percent more than four years ago the CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Party/Christian Social Union) could gain a considerable number of votes. Chancellor Merkel and the anti-people CDU/CSU played the social-political card in the election campaign. Like nearly all the other parties, they also put forward **social-democratic positions and empty phrases** in the election campaign. The **FDP** was an exception with its aggressive anticommunist, openly reactionary tone. Consequently, it suffered a historical defeat with 4.8 percent and got kicked out of the federal parliament for the first time. This manifests the deep **defensive of those in power on the basis of the lasting trend to the left** among the masses.

Merkel benefited most from a bourgeois election campaign that left out all **essential social issues of the masses** or glossed them over. The bourgeois opposition in the federal parliament essentially played along with all of this. Also, thanks to the bourgeois media, the majority of the voters got the impression that Germany is better off than it has been for a long time.

The clear loser in this game was the arrogant challenger and top candidate of the SPD (Social Democratic Party), Peer Steinbrück. The SPD won just 2.7 percent more votes compared to the elections of 2009 and achieved the second worst result since 1949 with 25.7 percent. Only 27 percent of the workers who went to the polls voted for the SPD this time. Correspondingly, **social democracy** could not overcome its **crisis** which it entered in **2005 with the abrupt end of the Schröder government**.

During the last weeks of the election campaign the **Greens** also experienced a downward trend. After the nuclear disaster of Fukushima the Greens pretended that they were still an active force for environmental protection. In the opinion polls the Greens got up to 28 percent at that time and already considered themselves to be a new popular party. With 8.4 percent and the loss of 2.3 percent they were rudely brought down to earth.

The bourgeois evaluations of the elections divert attention from the real causes of the disaster. The Greens did not lose in the first place because they had the wrong issues in the election campaign, but because they were exposed as obviously practicing **“greenwashing”**.

The Green party which emerged from the environmental movement has not much to do any more with the struggle for the defense of the natural environment, apart from the name and their statements. It embodies more and more clearly the main slogan of bourgeois ecologism of the unity of capitalist economy and ecology. In practice this means nothing else than: **environmental protection only if the profits are in order**. It is good that it paid the penalty for that. **The environmental movement hopefully uses the election disaster of the Greens as an opportunity to dissociate itself from the paralyzing embrace of the Greens**.

The **Left party** had already passed its peak in 2011. It disappointed its followers because of its work in the parliaments and the reformist political practice with a lot of quarreling and a lack of substance. The Left party even got kicked out of the regional parliaments in Schleswig-Holstein, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony in 2012/2013 and reached a low in between in the opinion polls that called into question its reentry into the federal parliament. It now got 8.6 percent of the votes – still a loss of 3.3 percent. However, it has succeeded in **getting out of the low of its crisis**. For this, however, it was played up massively by the

bourgeois media in the last weeks. After the failure of the project of the party the Pirates to absorb critical and left votes following a short peak, those in power turned once more to the Left party.

The election campaign tactics of the bourgeois parties, as well as the media promotion of the Left party were objectively oriented towards putting up a barrier against the revolutionary, class-militant and society-changing positions of the MLPD. This shows clearly how much those in power are actually afraid of our revolutionary direction in society.

The more the day of the elections approached, the more they attempted to mobilize the **petty-bourgeois parliamentary mode of thinking** of tactical voting considerations. However, this did not succeed in binding people more lastingly to the bourgeois parties. 15 percent of the voters took their decision for a party on election day itself, and 17 percent in the last days before. The low turn-out of 71.5 percent is similar to that in 2009, when it was only 0.7 percent less. This shows that the **binding force of the bourgeois parties could not be renewed by the election campaign**.

***Rote Fahne: What significance does it have that the FDP was kicked out of the federal parliament?***

The FDP has been tipping the scales of the coalition compliantly for the monopolies for decades. Now it is faced with an **acute existential crisis** with an uncertain outcome. It is mostly hated among the ordinary blue-collar and white-collar workers. Today you do not get anywhere in the petty-bourgeois intermediate strata either with an openly anti-labor, an openly pro-capitalist and crude anti-communist policy. Quite rightly everywhere in the country you experience a great **pleasure about the debacle of the FDP**, scorn, derision and gloating.

Only the **monopolies**, for which the **FDP** was an **indispensable instrument in the various governments** for defending the interests of the monopolies, are shocked.

***Rote Fahne: Never before were there so many invalid votes due to the five percent hurdle as in these federal elections. This is surely a new problem?***

For the first time at federal elections more than 15 percent of the cast votes were practically declared invalid because the elected parties and candidates did not pass the five percent hurdle. Including the non-voters and the invalid votes this time these are **40.7 percent of all eligible voters who are not represented in parliament at all**. This means a **crisis of legitimation of the bourgeois parliamentary system**.

The myth of bourgeois democracy according to which the parliament represents the will of the people is becoming more and more a farce. Never before did a German federal parliament have such a low legitimation and small basis of voters: Even if the CDU/CSU would form a grand coalition with the SPD, their parliamentarians would represent together only 47.5 percent of the eligible voters.

The growing detachment of the mass of the population from the bourgeois parliament, bourgeois parliamentarism and its institutions is developing **strategically** to become a **critical point for the dictatorship of the monopolies**.

The attempt to initiate a general **stabilization** of the prevailing conditions with these federal elections has **failed**. In view of the proneness to crisis of the imperialist world system it cannot be expected, even in the future, that capitalism and its bourgeois-democratic system of rule will develop a new attraction for the masses.

***Rote Fahne: How do the elections in Hesse fit in with this picture ?***

The **main beneficiary** here was - apparently because of the especially reactionary politics of the CDU in Hesse and **contrary to the federal trend – the SPD**, which gained 7 percent. It

obtained 30,7 percent, while the CDU saw only a slight increase. Otherwise, many things are similar to the trend of the federal elections, except that the FDP just managed to stay in parliament after a loss of 11.2 percent of votes. And the Left Party has managed to stay in parliament in Hesse – against all forecasts. Nevertheless, there will be many difficulties in forming a government: Neither the CDU/FDP nor the SPD/Greens have a majority in parliament. Any other constellation would be justifiably evaluated by at least a part of the voters as breaking a vow. We are very keen to see how the parties in Hesse want to solve this problem.

***Rote Fahne: Some left forces speak about a shift to the right in this federal election. Are you of the same opinion?***

This is a gross misinterpretation of the election results! The **negative trend** for the **neo-fascists** and the ultra-reactionaries has continued. Together they lost 16.7 percent of their votes and the neo-fascist NPD obtained only 1.3 percent. This is remarkable in view of the fact that the number of refugees and asylum seekers is growing again and especially in view of the evil smear campaigns against refugees in the last weeks. Apparently the anti-fascist and internationalist consciousness of the masses has consolidated further in the last years. The MLPD contributed to that considerably in its election campaign, too.

In the last year the **AfD** was constituted as a bourgeois party of euro-critics. Doubtlessly this is a reactionary bourgeois party, which also expresses nationalist and partly anti-foreign views. Nonetheless it would be an error to equate it with the reactionary Republicans or “Pro NRW”, which are built up deliberately by those in power to create an anti-foreign and profascist mood. The AfD is the product of the non-monopolist bourgeoisie and some smaller monopolies which refuse to subordinate the entire politics of the EU in the economic field to the interests of the biggest international monopolies. It is the **expression of the growing contradiction to the dictatorship of the international supermonopolies from the ranks of their own capitalist class basis.**

Right from the start it was built up as an alleged protest alternative with a massive expense of money and media. Nevertheless it failed to enter parliament with its 4.7 percent, not without dealing the deadly blow to the FDP by taking decisive 430,00 votes away from them. I assume that we will be dealing with this new party in the future, too.

***Rote Fahne: It is probable that after the federal elections there will be big problems in building a government. How do you evaluate that?***

At first there is the problem that there will be no working majority for the government favored by the ruling monopolies. However, I see another problem, too: Merkel always boasted in her election campaign spot :“*Germany is in a good position today. A strong economy ... I want us to be successful in the future as well.*“ This is completely divorced from reality. What about the eight million people with low wages and one euro jobs? What about the 13 million people in Germany faced with the danger of poverty? What about the wage level which has fallen massively for two decades now and the ever growing problems to support a family with ones earnings? What about the further warming of the world climate and the advancing environmental crisis?

Now after the elections Merkel already uses a different language. Now she is talking about the “immense problems” the new government would have to tackle. We did not hear much about that in the election campaign.

It is a fact that after five years of the world economic and financial crisis even the German economy has not come out of the crisis. Still in July the industrial production fell by 2.2 percent. So the downward trend going on for one and a half years is continuing. The crisis management, which is constantly pumping the cheapest money into the economy in a

speculative way, and the politics of “bail-out packages” are a great financial burden for all state budgets. A call for a new “bail-out package” for Greece has already been issued. At worst the German tax payer would be liable for the euro crisis with 732 billion euros! This “worst case” could come true if the economy is further falling. Therefore it is a problem for those in power that some of the countries serving as export outlets up till now like South Africa, India, Brazil, Turkey, Indonesia or South Korea themselves have fallen into the maelstrom of the crisis. Consequently the German exports into these countries declined considerably as well.

80 German firms are already planning to cut more than 60,000 jobs this year. Short-time work is continuing and an end to the halt in further recruitment in many factories is not foreseeable.

Immediately before the elections the most important associations of the monopolies gave an ultimatum to the new government to give the “protection of German exports” the highest priority. To this end they demand that all “restricting social standards”, “environmental guidelines”, limitations for exports of weapons for war a.s.o. have to be removed. (statement on 14 September, compare “Die Welt”, 15 September 2013) All parties would get into big trouble with their social mass basis if they followed these instructions of the monopolies and participated in their implementation. Every party forming a government with Merkel is aware of the fact what they are getting involved in with that. Therefore all of them are obviously shrinking back from forming a coalition with Merkel so quickly and unconditionally. In the end they won't have any other choice than to accept such a government instruction. This new government will come into conflict with their election promises more clearly than the two last ones. **Therefore one can describe the election victory of the monopoly party CDU/CSU only as Pyrrhic victory.**

#### ***Rote Fahne: Which options for a stable government are there?***

Numerically there are surely several possibilities. A grand coalition of CDU/CSU and the SPD would doubtlessly have a comfortable majority. After all it represents 67.2 percent of the valid votes and would have a majority of 79.8 percent of the seats in parliament. It could be based on the Land governments connected to them in the Federal Counsel (Bundesrat) and be able to govern for the entire four years in the sense of the monopolies. However, the SPD still deeply feels the shock of its bad election results following the Grand Coalition in 2009. Grand coalitions as a rule are suited to wear out the participants and promote oppositional forces and parties. The crisis-ridden social democracy cannot afford to suffer another severe defeat. The entry into the government would be a slap in the face for a part of its voters and would intensify the test of endurance of the SPD.

A coalition of CDU/CSU and the Greens would also be conceivable. However the Greens, who do not reject governmental posts in other cases, are shrinking from that, too. For they are quite clear about the fact that such a government could cost them many votes and would rather accelerate their present downward trend.

Finally there remains the option of a SPD/Greens/Left Party government. Apart from the fact that the SPD and the Greens would have to break their anticommunist pledge of loyalty, this constellation would be a real invitation to the strengthening of radically left and revolutionary positions. **Every conceivable government carries the seed of decline in it from the very beginning.**

#### ***Rote Fahne: The MLPD has conducted an excellent and offensive election campaign, but has lost almost 4000 second votes – how did this happen?***

Our guideline “Radically left, revolutionary, genuine socialism” was an excellent guideline for conveying a fundamental societal alternative to the growing number of people in search of it. It showed clearly the difference to the bourgeois parties and sharpened the **unmistakable profile of the MLPD**. We developed a whole fireworks of arguments rich in facts. We tore to

pieces the speech bubbles of “the lack of an alternative”, the “best government since the turnabout” or the “social justice of Peer Steinbrück”. That hit home!

The voter action groups in 80 cities and towns with altogether almost 5 000 members and friends of the MLPD this time were the sole **supporters of the election campaign** and did great work. They planned, carried out and independently financed the entire work. For the first time this was a decentrally organized election campaign with **great decision-making power of the rank and file**.

The new thing was the high proportion of young people. In Gelsenkirchen we had 473 members in the voter action groups, compared to 400 in the year 2009. 23 percent of them were young people! On the national level almost 40 000 election posters were hung up by the voter action groups, more than 700 000 election newspapers and tens of thousands of leaflets about migrants, youth and other subjects were spread. This was revolutionary enthusiasm and selfless personal initiative live! Despite this, with a total of 25 336 valid second votes, the MLPD lost almost 4000 votes nationwide. The **nationwide media boycott** once more proved to be the one of the **most powerful weapons** against overcoming the relative isolation of the MLPD. While in the last weeks of the election campaign Sahra Wagenknecht or Gregor Gysi were presented in every talk show, the MLPD was allotted exactly 12 minutes broadcasting time in six weeks in the public service broadcasting, distributed among different channels! In places where some newspaper articles were published, significantly better results were achieved immediately.

Two opposite trends underlie the loss of votes : **First of all, a loss of spontaneous votes for the MLPD**, especially in those areas and regions where the MLPD is unknown to a great extent or where no systematic work of the party among the rank and file work is being done. In the federal states Baden-Württemberg, Saxonia and Saxony-Anhalt we lost 4 745 votes. **Secondly, a clear trend** with slightly higher numbers of votes in **centers of our work among the rank and file**, or in those places where **the offensive of the MLPD for genuine socialism became apparent to the masses**. Thus we were able to break and reverse the negative trend of 2009 in nine federal states. In Hamburg and Berlin we even achieved the best election results since the MLPD has been running for elections. It is a very pleasing fact that we can record a positive development of the vote again in areas where we are building up the party, like the Saarland and Rhineland-Palatinate.

These differentiated election results show more than ever that parliamentary elections only partially reflect the real consciousness of the masses and the work of the MLPD among the masses. Therefore the **election results especially in the era of mass media** and the effect of the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking can **only be a relative yardstick** of the development of the class consciousness of the masses. As a rule, we certainly gained better election results, in spite of the manipulation of public opinion, where the work of the MLPD among the rank and file is developed and where it was possible to put up direct candidates as well. Thus the best results of second votes as a rule can be recorded where our 41 direct candidates stood for election. This means that a certain **personal acquaintance makes it easier for the masses to find access to the MLPD** and to gain confidence in the party. Therefore it is doubtlessly better – wherever it is possible – to connect the election campaign with putting up direct candidates.

***Rote Fahne: How do you explain the loss of spontaneous votes and the growth of conscious votes ?***

In the federal elections in 2005 we had the biggest growth in second votes. There we got 45 238 second votes and had at least more than 50 000 voters. In the previous year the nationwide movement of the Monday demonstrations and a whole series of workers' struggles, with the highlight of the strike of the Opel workers, had developed. At that time the MLPD had been omnipresent in the media for several weeks. The fact that all over the country the

despised bourgeois politicians agitated against the MLPD made it the more interesting for many people. Mainly in the new federal states there was a rapid increase in membership after that. This positive effect diminished after the media boycott started again radically in autumn 2004. Apparently the bourgeois opinion makers understood that the slander against us was rather counterproductive. Nevertheless, we still could get many spontaneous voters in 2005 as an effect of this development.

In 2006 then followed the decision of the European Council for a **European-wide campaign of modern anti-communism**. Since then it has been the center of the system of the petty-bourgeois mode of thinking. The spreading of a petty-bourgeois-anticommunist mode of thinking against the MLPD works as the decisive **hurdle against people turning spontaneously to the MLPD**. And since 2006 the founding and boosting of the Left Party has been added to that, which at the same time aimed at channeling the left potential of society into parliamentary activities.

One must take in account that **under the given conditions a relatively high consciousness is required to vote for the MLPD**. Under the influence of the petty-bourgeois parliamentary mode of thinking the vote for the MLPD seems to be a lost vote.

However, these hurdles can be overcome! The **systematic work among the rank and file proved to be the decisive weapon to break through the relative isolation**.

Naturally the manipulation of public opinion has a greater effect in relatively quiet times. Therefore during the election campaign an open polarization with the working class and the MLPD, as well, was avoided to a great extent. However, in times of open class conflicts and the unfolding of the open antagonism the effect of the distorting manipulation of public opinion will be lessened.

The district of Gelsenkirchen doubtlessly has the most developed work of the party among the rank and file and with 340 second votes per 100 000 voters achieved the best result in the country, followed by other districts/direct candidates where work among the rank and file is a trump card. In Gelsenkirchen we obtained between 4 110 and 1 087 second votes per 100 000 voters in the best polling stations. Almost all of these polling stations are in areas of influence of the MLPD in Gelsenkirchen. These numbers are many times higher than the average of 57 voters per 100 000 voters nationwide.

In Sonneberg Andreas Eifler represents the holiday resort Truckenthal with his intensive rebellious work among the youth and children, as well as active commitment to the environmental movement. Frank Oettler in Halle fought courageously against his repeated dismissals, which aroused considerable public attention. He represents an attractive youth work and an irresistible militant spirit against those in power.

There was a growth in the centers of our systematic work in factories as well, like in the Bochum constituencies or some miners' cities like Bottrop, Marl and Gladbeck.

***Rote Fahne: That means that the MLPD not only conducted an election campaign, but also an offensive for genuine socialism in the struggle against modern anticommunism. How did people react to this?***

The assessment that more and more people are searching for a fundamental alternative proved to be exactly correct. We held a real strategy debate on the streets about the lack of perspective of capitalism, which can only further exist in the form of crises. We held a mass discussion about the necessity and possibility of the societal alternative of genuine socialism. With thousands of people we evaluated the historic defeat of the working-class movement, the destruction of the former socialist countries through the development of a new petty-bourgeois bureaucracy leading to the restoration of capitalism. In thousands of talks we attacked and tore apart the polemic terms "Stalinism" and "Maoism" and started a successful series of events "Don't give anticommunism a chance". We filed explosive lawsuits against Rudolf van Hüllen as an agent of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution and against the anticommunist motivated bank boycott. Hundreds of stirring arguments were developed,

improved and exchanged at rallies, information stands and in personal talks . Even if in the face of the social environment of taboo topics and the continuing dampening of the crisis they did not lead to a direct decision to vote for the MLPD in the most cases, the **revolutionary potential around the MLPD has expanded considerably. This will undoubtedly have lasting effects.**

Especially the workers are listening to these arguments very attentively, keeping them in mind and will be subjecting them to a careful examination in the future. Most importantly, the workers and broad masses of people could see that **word and deed of the MLPD accord with each other.** We did not conduct a boring election campaign of debates or talk shows. We promoted the path of the working-class offensive when the Opel workers prepared their independent unlimited strike. We struggled for world peace in the struggle against the danger of war in Syria. We put proletarian internationalism into practice with the active solidarity with the struggle of the Kurdish people, especially in Rojava. We lived up to our name “party of the youth”. We defied the bank boycott and implemented active environmental protection with a campaign of three months for renewable energy/introduction of photovoltaics and solar heating in our buildings. We were active in the antifascist struggle, especially in the focal points of the audacious actions of the neo-fascists, for example in Dortmund. We helped to expose the scandal of the storage of toxic waste underground in mines and could build up on twenty years of investigative work through cooperating in factory newspapers and citizens' initiative groups.

The **openly conducted polarization with modern anticommunism became a key issue** of this election struggle. However, we also have to be a bit patient and take into consideration that many people who heard about our interesting and convincing arguments did not elect us immediately on the basis of such an encounter with the MLPD. That requires further-going experiences with the MLPD, discussions, persuasion work and personal connections. That is why we emphasize the great significance of our systematic work among the rank and file, which of course can be best realized in the **self-run organizations of the masses.** There you can work together on a regular and systematic basis. There you can check how word and deed of the MLPD accord with each other.

***Rote Fahne: Has the MLPD changed in this election struggle?***

You can say that for sure! Such an offensive in which you discuss with the masses day in and day out is, of course, a gigantic challenge. Every sign of distance to the masses, of ideological-political insecurity, skepticism or the own internalization of the relative isolation are like cumbersome chains which have to be broken. Such a complex campaign can only be conducted with clear goals if every worship of spontaneity is overcome. Such exhausting times can only be mastered, even by our active rank and file, if the leadership is able to plan dialectically and exactly. Our direct candidates face vehement opposition and were strengthened through solidarity and strong cohesion. All of these processes of self-transformation were taken on by the party, also as a consequence of the 9<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, and we have taken big steps forward .

***Rote Fahne: The MLPD cooperated with a whole number of migrant organizations in the election campaign. What was the mutual benefit?***

The cooperation with progressive migrant organizations was a great enrichment of our election campaign and of **strategic significance for uniting revolutionary people in Germany.** Seven organizations with Turkish migration background called on people to elect the MLPD, four of them within the framework of a joint campaign. Those were AGIF, ATIF, ADHF and Yasanacak Dünya. Together with them we issued a call to the migrant voters with a circulation of 15 000, posters and a series of stickers. The most important concerns of the migrant organizations, like the demand for the active and passive right to vote, thus became a part of the election campaign of the MLPD. Süleyman Gürcan from ATIF spoke impressively at the

opening rally of the MLPD in Kassel. A highlight was undoubtedly the festival of the Kurds on 21 September in Dortmund. Even though YEKKOM called on people in Germany to vote for the Left party, the revolutionary solidarity movement of the MLPD and ICOR, for which I could speak at the festival, conquered the hearts of the tens of thousands of participants. At the Kurdish festival for the first time I was strongly applauded for my clear statement that solidarity should not be a one-way street, but that the **migrants living in Germany should also take part in the class struggle here**, that they should organize themselves and fight together in Germany and with German revolutionaries.

***Rote Fahne: One professed aim was to lay stronger emphasis on the youth work in the election campaign. Was that successful?***

We can announce a double success in that: now youth work plays a much more important role in the entire party. The voter action groups appeared at schools, vocational high schools, in front of clubs and concerts. Thus, it is no coincidence that the best election results of the MLPD were achieved in those places in which **a particularly successful youth work has been realized**. On the other hand, the youth league REBELL has further enhanced its rebellious attraction. Ideologically-politically and organizationally, the league has further consolidated itself and has broken new ground in its activities. Entire groups of Rebell went to stadiums, to skater-grounds, to the meeting points of the youth at stations and clubs. With an event entitled „Fight drug abuse” in Duisburg Rebell took up the fight against the youth-contempting slogan „For the right of intoxication” of the Left party and the Pirates. A special characteristic were the youth election parties, especially the one in Gelsenkirchen with more than 300 visitors. The **progressive, anti-fascist and revolutionary mass culture** is a decisive key to win the minds and hearts of the adolescents.

***Rote Fahne: The motto „Ensure victory!” was already spread at the smashing election parties. What does that refer to?***

It is about the upcoming phase of party work. To ensure our victory means to convince the contacts we have won for a lasting cooperation, to consolidate the newly won mass influence sustainably and to win many new friends for a strong, promising fighting alliance! The great dialectician among the military strategists, Carl von Clausewitz, said: „... *that the energy thrown into it chiefly determines the value of the victory; that this pursuit is a second act of the victory, in many cases more important also than the first ...*“ (Clausewitz, *On War*). This clear statement of Clausewitz does away with an occasionally widespread misinterpretation: According to that, the **defensive which follows an offensive** is not seen as a necessary contribution to accomplish the victory, but misunderstood and discredited as withdrawal or reduction of activity!

The victory of our offensive rests on the **considerably grown mass influence** of our arguments, the **attraction of MLPD** as the revolutionary workers' party of the future, of the youth, the liberation of women and the **representation of a new style of politics**. To ensure victory means to **make all this sustainable**. It means to strengthen the self-organizations of the masses, too, from the women's movement to the militant environmental movement in the cooperation to build the environmental union. It also means to **recover** after the huge efforts in this hot period of the election campaign. A good many personal affairs have been left undone and have to be finished! We have just started to warm up in the election campaign and are taking our time to prepare for taking part in the European elections on 25 May 2014. Every new government will be confronted with the **contradiction between the appearance of the election promises and the reality** of the actual economic and political development. The taboo issues will, whether they want it or not, get into the focus of the dispute in this European election. Then, we will **present the bill**: What was promised to us about the long-lasting upswing and how does that fit in with the new slump in world economic and finance crisis!?



The new crisis programs and the “bail-out packages” within the EU like for Greece will be due. The state debt will increase, despite all cheap money, especially in the communities. It is not foreseeable when the next flood of the century or regional environmental catastrophe will break out. We take up the challenge to coordinate the struggles and movements European-wide with the new quality of the proletarian internationalism within the framework of ICOR and give mutual support in party building. In this election campaign we will make the book „The class struggle and the struggle for the unity of humankind and nature“ know nationwide. It will be published at that time and we will hold readings and discussion rounds. And we will especially place emphasis on the **youth work** in that election campaign again. This task of the 9<sup>th</sup> Party Congress must penetrate every part of party work in future and characterizes **its strategic aspect**.

***Rote Fahne: Is there something you would like to let the election campaigners know?***

It is a matter close to my heart to thank everyone who struggled so actively, passionately and inventively during the last months. It was a great experience also for me as top candidate, to meet all the comrades, young people and friends throughout the country and to take the offensive jointly. No success came easily! We all had to change ourselves, learn new things, leave the beaten paths and go down new ones, but we also had to make good use of our strong points. However, because we could firmly rely on each other, everyone did his/her best and we learned from each other. Our election campaign stood out unmistakably from all the decadence, the hollow speeches, as well as the greed for positions and money of the bourgeois election campaign. **The selflessness, the ingenuity, the militancy and the deeply felt solidarity are what make the MLPD so trustworthy and attractive.** To a further fruitful cooperation! Good luck !