

***Socialist March* (1891 / recorded 1974)**

Abstract

This workers' song, the *Socialist March*, was written for the SPD party conference in Erfurt in 1891. The lyrics were penned by the social democratic journalist and poet Max Kegel, while the melody was composed by Carl Gramm, an Austrian composer of numerous workers' songs. With its rousing lyrics and combative message, the song quickly became an integral part of socialist singing culture and was also translated into several other languages. This recording of the *Socialist March* was published in the GDR in 1974.

Source

Come on, socialists, close ranks!
The drum calls, the banners fly.
It is time to liberate labor
it is time for freedom to rise!
The earth's happiness, the sun's splendor
the light of the spirit, the power of knowledge
let it be given to all the people!
That is the goal we strive for.
That is the sacred war of labor!
The people are on our side, victory is on our side.

You countless millions
in mines and fields, in cities and the countryside,
who must toil for meager wages
and work faithfully with diligent hands:
You still sigh under the spell of misery!
Hear the wake-up call! Join us!
To rise up from torment and suffering
That is the goal we strive for.
That is the sacred war of labor!
The people are on our side, victory is on our side.

We do not use the tools of barbarians,
we do not fight with flint and spear.
The victory of freedom for our multitudes
will be won by the sword of the spirit, the banner of justice.
To have peace reign, prosperity flourish,
joy and hope shine brightly
to give a home and a life to laborers
That is the goal we strive for.
That is the sacred war of labor!
The people are with us, victory is with us.

Source: *Sozialistenmarsch*, lyrics: Max Kegel, music: Carl Gramm, 1891. Recording by unknown artists, 1974.

Internet Archive

Recommended Citation: Socialist March (1891 / recorded 1974), published in: German History in Documents and Images,

<<https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/wilhelmine-germany-and-the-first-world-war-1890-1918/ghdi:audio-5138>> [September 26, 2025].