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Germany

Mass mobilization against the far-right AfD party in Germany

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At a secret meeting between members of the far-right “Alternative for Germany” (AfD) party and fascists from the “identitarian movement”, their plans for “remigration” were discussed. The fascists want to force millions of migrants (including German nationals) to emigrate, if necessary by force.

Although the party later declared that the meeting was not a party meeting and that "remigration" was not part of its programme, leading party representatives have publicly defended this slogan on several occasions, including at the last party congress. The Executive Committee has never denied these statements. Today, with the publicised meeting with a well-known fascist, the Austrian co-founder of the identitarian movement Martin Sellner, a very large public has suddenly become aware of the ideas found within the AfD.

In the space of a few days, tens of thousands of people took to the streets in dozens of towns to demonstrate against the AfD. In total, more than a million people turned out in less than a week, and the mobilization continues. It is encouraging to see how many people are taking to the streets to oppose this inhumane project of the fascist right.

However, not all of these people are free of xenophobia, far from it. Many support the government's repressive policy against refugees. The government supports the EU's refugee policy and has - even during the rise of this movement against the AfD - adopted new tougher measures against refugees. These include more possibilities for the police to search people (when looking for their documents), arresting people at night, extending detention for deportation to up to 28 days, and so on. At the height of the current movement, the federal government has no hesitation in announcing that it is going to conclude readmission agreements with six other countries in order to be able to expel more refugees (last year, 16430 refugees were expelled).

Unfortunately, this policy is supported by the majority of German citizens. So it's not surprising that the main speakers at many of the demonstrations in recent days have been politicians from the parties that now form the federal government (e.g. the minister-presidents of Lower Saxony, Hamburg and Rhineland-Palatinate, the mayors of major cities, etc.). Anti-fascists and revolutionaries who criticize the government's refugee policy form a small minority.

Parallel to these demonstrations, two activities have been stepped up, which we revolutionary Marxists are following with mixed feelings:

A.) Many are calling for a ban on the AfD, but this will do no good, as this party now has 40,000 members and has at least 20% of the electorate behind it (even more so in East Germany). These right-wing ideas cannot be banned; they must be fought by left-wing politics and mobilisation, particularly through successful progressive resistance to the policies of the rulers, especially at the social level.

A ban would give the party a martyr's role and make the political struggle against it more difficult. After all, it is the government's repressive policy against refugees that vindicates the xenophobic ideas of the far right. What's more, banning a party would certainly be associated with the "fight against extremism" and therefore with a more repressive policy towards class struggle activists.

B.) The initiative to deprive Björn Höcke, leader of the AfD's openly fascist wing, of certain fundamental political rights under Article 18 of the Constitution is making us feel less sick to our stomachs. A petition to this effect addressed to

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the government and parliament has so far (20 January) been signed by 1.5 million people.

20 January 2024

PS:

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