Workers, youth speak on Berlin meeting to mark 75th anniversary of the Fourth International

Our correspondents
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The World Socialist Web Site spoke with workers and youth who attended the meeting in Berlin last weekend to mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Fourth International.

André K. said: "I thought the contribution by Johannes Stern was important in explaining the significance of the role of the working class and why so many political tendencies are indifferent or hostile to the working class. I have personal experience of such attitudes. I was involved in an environmental group that organized demonstrations, but the group opposed the involvement of any political parties and basically blamed consumers, i.e., ordinary workers, for the problem of climate change.

"I wrote a document in which I explained that only by winning the support of the working class on the basis of the perspective of the Fourth International would it be possible to make fundamental changes. The meeting made clear to me the importance of reading David North's The Heritage We Defend, which deals in detail with the history of the Fourth International in the post-war period.

"I think the attention paid to history by the PSG (Partie für Soziale Gleichheit—Socialist Equality Party) and the Fourth International is very important. It makes it possible for me to draw my own conclusions and develop my perspective."

Jakob and Janina from Frankfurt am Main also spoke to the WSWS. Jakob said, "I found the order of speakers good. Many aspects were examined and the whole context was well presented. It is worth mentioning that the event lived up to its international character. I found the presentation of the perspective of the English section especially important.

"The point raised about the role of the middle class in the post-war period was important. It throws a different light on the establishment parties in the 1950s and 1960s and the social layers they targeted. We knew so little about it until now. It was often said there was no proletariat. These layers were persuaded they were a little better off and belonged to the lower middle class.

"I also found the section on the "Great Betrayal" in Sri Lanka important. It made clear that a Marxist policy excludes participation in bourgeois governments."

Janina said, "I thought the comments made on the Frankfurt School were important because it is something we had already discussed with the International Youth and Students for Social Equality. For example, the book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. I would have liked to see more attention paid to the positions of the Frankfurt School, dealing with them in more detail.

"The discussion over centrism and its nature was also significant. I wondered why Brandt was being currently elevated by the media. As was said, the bourgeoisie needs someone like him now."

Sergei, 50, from Rostov on Don in Russia, told the WSWS, "I was attracted by the tradition of the Fourth International, the fact that the socialist tradition that led to the October Revolution still exists today. This is important for me. As a Russian, I feel that I am part of that tradition, which is under continuous attack today in Russia. No difference is being made between Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin.

"At the same time, there are thoughtful people in Russia who are particularly concerned about this trend of neo-Stalinism. There is growing interest in socialism among students but, of course, the many decades of

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propaganda against Trotsky have left deep traces."

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