

Seventy thousand attend “Rock against the right wing” in Chemnitz, Germany

Our reporters
5 September 2018

One week after neo-Nazi riots in the German city of Chemnitz, around 70,000 people attended a rock concert against the far right on Monday. The concert in Chemnitz, held under the motto “We are more”, showed the massive opposition to right-wing extremism and fascism on the part of workers and youth.

The performances by well-known German bands and rappers—including the Toten Hosen, Kraftklub and Marteria and Casper—were repeatedly interrupted by chants from the crowd of anti-fascist slogans such as “Nazis out” or “Alerta Alerta Antifascista”. Protests against the far right also took place in other cities on the same day. In Hanover around 3,000 people took to the streets and in Duisburg a protest by 1,500 stopped a march by 50 supporters of the extreme right Pegida movement.

Reporters from the *World Socialist Web Site*, members of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) and its youth and student organization, the IYSSE, distributed large numbers of a leaflet titled “The fight against right-wing terror requires a socialist perspective” and spoke with participants at the concert.

“We come from Chemnitz and are not prepared to tolerate what happened here,” Felix and Jenny said. “Such a protest shows that something is really wrong in society and makes people aware, even those who are not directly involved. I hope that people then become active, not just at such ‘events’, but in general. And I hope they openly take to the street against the right wing.”

Anika, a student of politics, said: “I’m here today because all the radical right-wing movements active in East Germany and especially in Chemnitz make me incredibly frightened and angry. One has to oppose them. Otherwise it would look like 1933. There are

many causes for the aggressive mobilisation of the right-wing extremists. Politics plays a major role in this, as does the media. They constantly talk about “refugee crisis” or “anti-deportation industry”. This type of language and reporting is now “normal” and only helps to spur on the far right.”

Christina, an actress, explained: “I feel you cannot leave the field to the far right, you have to take a stand. It’s not acceptable for people to give the Hitler salute in this country and chase people through the streets.”

Hilde also condemned the far right-wing riots of last weekend and said: “I think a point has been reached here in Chemnitz that is exemplary for all of Germany and even for the whole of Europe. On this issue people have to come together to show their opposition. And now masses of people have come together. Fifteen percent voted for the AfD and the other 85 percent have to make their presence felt.”

Her companion, Klaus, criticized the fact that policies of the right-wing extremists were being adopted by the establishment parties. “The AfD comes up with the concepts and suddenly the other parties refer to ‘the price of asylum’, ‘asylum tourism’ and so on. In using these slogans they take over in practice the policies proposed by the AfD.”

WSWS reporters also talked to Marie and Rika from Chemnitz, who had just graduated from high school. “I think that politics is focusing too much on extreme opinions,” Marie said. Asked about the return of German militarism and the massive armament of the German army, which is not discussed publicly, she explained: “Nobody talks about this. I have no idea what they want to do with the money flowing into these areas. Everyone should be informed. I want to know why they need the money. Why do they want to rearm? For what?”

Rika adds: “I believe that information is withheld because politicians are afraid of the majority. They are afraid that so many are now standing up against racism and so many voices raised against it. This is not what they anticipated. They try to contain these things at all costs.”

Rika is aware that the call for the intervention of the state, which is now being raised by all established parties, is in reality directed against the broad masses and not against the far right. “They say they will now spend more money on the police. They say they are investing money to protect people. But I do not think that’s the reason. And I do not believe that people understand it that way.

“When I go out on the street, I’m as afraid of the police as of the far right. I am uneasy when there are police cars everywhere. And I feel even more insecure when the parties now say they are strengthening the police force even more. I ask myself what they’re trying to do, apart from gaining more control over the population.”

The SGP leaflet explained the political connections between the aggressive activities of the right-wing extremists and the return of German militarism and the growth of a powerful police state, which is being pursued by all of the capitalist parties. Many took the leaflet and read it with interest. “The only social force that can counter this development and stop the extreme right is the international working class,” it said.

It added that: “the SGP calls for the expansion of the class struggle across the continent. The conspiracy of the grand coalition, the intelligence services and right-wing extremists must be stopped.

“It is time to revive the revolutionary socialist traditions of Marx, Engels, Luxemburg, Liebknecht, Lenin and Trotsky, defended only by the International Committee of the Fourth International and its sections. The SGP calls on workers and young people to join its ranks and take up the fight against capitalism, fascism and war.”



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