

Berlin police brutally assault students occupying Humboldt University to protest against the genocide in Gaza

Our reporters
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On Wednesday, dozens of students occupied Humboldt University's Department of Social Sciences to protest against the genocide in Gaza and the complicity of the university administration. Even though the occupation is to be officially tolerated until Thursday at 6 p.m. according to a statement by the university management, police have already brutally attacked the students.

When a banner was unfurled and leaflets thrown from the balcony of the building during the protest, the university's security service locked the building with a chain and padlock so that nobody could get in or out. This put the students' lives at risk in the event of a fire.

The police did not stop this, but allowed it to happen and then sealed off all access to the building themselves. A sit-in blockade by supporters in front of the entrance to the institute was broken up beforehand with brutal force and the activists were taken away one by one, with one person temporarily fainting. The police refused to comment on the events at the scene.

The actions of Berlin police, who had already brutally dispersed an earlier protest camp at the HU and another at the Free University, are reminiscent of the darkest times in German history. The chairman of the International Editorial Board of the WSWs, David North, commented on X (formerly Twitter):

Nazi-like police in Berlin attacked today Humboldt University students, many of them Jewish, who were protesting the #GazaGenocide?. The assault occurred near the site of the Nazi regime's 1933 book burning. Hitler would be delighted with this revival of

fascist state violence.

In the evening, there was an initial meeting between university president Julia von Blumenthal and the students occupying university premises. The Student Coalition Berlin, which took part in the protest, then announced that the occupation would continue for now. A statement published by the university administration shortly afterwards announced: "The occupation will be tolerated until Thursday, May 23 at 6 pm."

Among other things, the students are demanding that the HU pledge its support to students convicted of its political actions, publish a statement in which it recognizes the genocide in Gaza, and publicly reject the tightening of the Berlin Higher Education Act.

The speaker of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) at the HU and European election candidate of the Socialist Equality Party (SGP), Gregor Kahl, explained in a statement in front of the occupied institute:

Left to themselves, students cannot defend their democratic rights. It is necessary for the working class to come to their aid. We call on all university workers to go on strike in defense of the students, as academic workers are doing in California. And we call on the entire international working class to stop the supply of arms to Israel, open the borders and defend the people of Gaza.



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