

Hundreds of thousands demonstrate against racism and the AfD

Our reporters
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This weekend, hundreds of thousands of people once again demonstrated against racism, the neo-fascist AfD party and the shift to the right by the entire political establishment in Germany. The largest demonstration took place on Munich's Theresienwiese, where around 300,000 people gathered.

Protests against the right took place in around 200 cities on Saturday and Sunday. At least 50,000 gathered in Bremen, 30,000 in Hanover, 25,000 in Nuremberg, 15,000 each in Wuppertal and Giessen, and many thousands attended larger demonstrations in Hamburg, Darmstadt, Rostock, Dortmund and Duisburg.

The huge protests show the enormous opposition to the integration of the AfD into official politics. Many participants expressed their rejection not only of the AfD and CDU, but also of the Greens, SPD and Left Party, which are themselves pursuing a policy of deportations, armament and enriching the rich.

Reporters of the WSWS and members of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party - SGP) spoke to protesters. "We can't stand the way things are going at the moment", a woman stated at the demonstration in Duisburg. "And so you have to do something somewhere... We are most concerned that the right-wingers will get even more support. And at some point we'll be back where we were in 1933."

In video interviews with the WSWS many protesters also expressed their opposition to the SPD and the Greens: "The fact is that they also continue to spread the lie that migration is our big problem", a young man stated. And another one: "The Greens in particular, who also had this 10-point plan, are not making much of a difference. The direction is always further towards the right and that's not a direction for me." And a young woman added: "I generally don't think much of either the SPD or the Greens, because the Greens are

also behind the arms shipments. They support them too. They are behind Israel and also fully behind Ukraine with the arms deliveries."

While resistance to all bourgeois parties is growing, the organizers are trying to subordinate the demonstrations to the election campaigns of the SPD and the Greens and thus ultimately stifle them. The demonstration in Munich was organized by the 'München ist Bunt!' (Munich is colourful) association, whose chairwoman sits on the Munich City Council for the SPD. The first speaker in Duisburg was the President of the Bundestag Bärbel Bas (SPD), in Hanover the Minister of War Boris Pistorius (SPD).

Members of the SGP opposed these attempts. At the demonstrations, they distributed the statement 'What next in the fight against the AfD?', which castigates all Bundestag parties for their right-wing policies and advocates a socialist program against fascism and war.

It states:

It is obvious that the rise of the AfD cannot be stopped by supporting or voting for the SPD or the Greens. Even if there were to be a government majority without the AfD after the election, it would essentially implement its refugee and security policy and thus further strengthen the far right.

The Left Party will not change this either. The Wagenknecht wing of the party, which split in January to form the BSW, is now openly working with the AfD. On Friday, seven of the 10 BSW deputies in the Bundestag voted together with the AfD, CDU and FDP in favour of the controversial Immigration Restriction Act.

Since Wagenknecht's departure, the remaining Left Party has donned a somewhat more left-wing mask on the refugee issue. The party specialises in capturing social and political opposition and steering it into a dead end. But whenever it takes on government responsibility, it proves to be a loyal accomplice to the most reactionary class interests. This applies in particular to the three party veterans who are now at the centre of its election campaign—Gregor Gysi, Dietmar Bartsch and Bodo Ramelow.

Fascism cannot be stopped by protesting against its symptoms. It must be eradicated at the root, and that root is the capitalist social system.

“The fight against fascism... is inextricably linked to building a socialist mass movement”, the SGP stresses in its election manifesto.

We counterpose the international unity of the working class to the fascists' nationalist poison and anti-immigrant agitation. Refugees and migrants are not responsible for the social catastrophe caused by the government's policies of war and austerity. They are themselves an integral part of the working class.

We counterpose the European Union of banks and corporations, of mass death and war, with the perspective of a Socialist United States of Europe—the unity of the European working class to break the power of the banks and corporations. Instead of fighting one another, we call on Russian and Ukrainian workers to unite against the warmongers in their respective countries.

Against the EU of banks and corporations, of mass death and war! For a Socialist United States of Europe!

Defend democratic rights!

Equal rights for migrants and refugees!



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