

GEGEN DIE STRÖMUNG



Organ für den Aufbau der Revolutionären Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands

Organ for the building of the revolutionary Communist Party of Germany

9-10/2024

September-October 2024

Antinational? Theses on the national question

In most countries of the world today, nationalism plays a very nasty role in inciting the masses, enforcing "divide and rule" and concealing class differences. The struggle against this reactionary nationalism must be waged in every country where it exists - especially in Germany. However, this must not lead to nationalism directed against national oppression among oppressed nationalities, which could have revolutionary potential, being portrayed as de facto reactionary, as is also propagated by so-called "anti-national" forces in Germany. The following theses on the national question with a view to history in Germany and internationally, as well as the current international situation, will explain in more detail which false political assessments and false attitudes this leads to, but also which problems need to be taken into account in debates.

1. within Germany in 1871

The brutal unity of the German nation in 1871 (war against Austria, Denmark and France), which was created under Bismarck's leadership, made it clear that the formation of a German nation had long since been completed, but that there were national minorities within Germany, the Polish, Danish and, in Alsace-Lorraine, the French minority, who had the right to fight against the oppression of their language and for their national rights - right up to the state separation from the German Empire !

If this struggle had been rejected, it would have been merely a reflex of the Prussian-German chauvinism of the time, of German nationalism, which, under the guise of internationalism, rejected the right to nationality and national culture of this and other minorities in the German Reich (Sorbian population, Jewish population and Sinti and Roma).

2. german colonialism

The struggle against German colonialism on the part of the African population, which was colonially oppressed in every respect, was right and just. It was also their right not only to wage an armed struggle, but also to think about and strive for a state of their own. If this is defamed as reactionary nationalism, then it must be criticized very clearly.

3. nazi-fascism

After the German Nazi army had invaded and occupied a number of countries, such as Poland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Greece etc., murdered and looted there, deported the Jewish population, it was clear and right that the question of national oppression was also an essential issue in these occupied countries in order to lead the struggle against German imperialism, German Nazi-fascism. Anyone who defames the struggle of the Greek liberation movement as reactionary-nationalist, for example, does not understand that an

entire country, a nation, the Greek nation, was oppressed. That is why the struggle for the liberation of Greece was a national liberation struggle in which it had to be shown which political force was stronger: the proletariat or the bourgeois. It would be incomprehensible to us if someone did not recognize the national liberation war in Greece at that time as a national liberation struggle.

In the following theses, we will at least briefly address some of the questions and problems of national liberation struggles as they have emerged over the last 100 years and especially in recent decades.

4. national liberation struggles in the last 100 years

Let us recall the national liberation struggle in China after the invasion by Japanese imperialism in 1937. This national liberation struggle clearly pursued democratic goals and was led by strong communist forces. In 1949, victory was won against the aggression of US imperialism and China was liberated from imperialism. This was the most important event after May 8, 1945.

We do not want to enumerate here the whole list of justified national movements against the imperialist superpowers and colonialists after 1945. Congo, Algeria, Vietnam, Korea, etc. The people of these areas were right to resist imperialism/colonialism and to fight for their own state.

What happens when this goal is achieved, how attempts are then made by all means to achieve a kind of neo-colonialist dependency, to push back emancipatory elements, is a question of the balance of power, just another struggle that still has to be waged in these countries. It is true that the struggles of the revolutionary forces in recent decades have not really been successful. However, this does not speak against the legitimacy of all these struggles, but above all reflects the general development and situation in recent decades, in which there were no longer any strong revolutionary, communist forces capable of countering this.

5. instrumentalization of national liberation struggles by the imperialist superpowers

However, it is important to point out a major problem that exists in every national liberation struggle from the very beginning. The increasingly brutal struggle between the imperialist superpowers also leads to legitimate struggles against an imperialist competitor being exploited to weaken it. At the same time, the problem with weak national liberation movements is that they may turn to an imperialist superpower for tactical reasons in order to receive help from it in the struggle against other imperialist superpowers.

We don't want to become too abstract. During Nazi-fascism, German imperialism in particular supported the legitimate national liberation movement in India, for example, against its English competitor, against English imperialism, with massive amounts of money and weapons. And of course there was a struggle within the Indian national liberation movement as to whether to accept or reject this offer of alliance from Nazi-fascism. The same problem existed in the Irish national liberation movement, which was striving to break away from British imperialism. And we recall that German Nazi-fascism also supported the Palestinian leadership and parts of the Palestinian population with ideology and weapons in the struggle against British imperialism and that this struggle was also directed against the immigrant Jewish population and the indigenous Jewish population

6 The Kurdish liberation struggle today

We understand the skepticism towards national liberation movements in the current situation. Because it is not a mistake to start from reality, and in reality there are currently many conflicts, especially in Africa, which are proxy wars between imperialist superpowers, which are financed by the superpowers and which are not progressive national liberation movements.

But perhaps we can convince with a current exception, namely the liberation struggle of the Kurdish population in Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. It is a national liberation struggle, it is about the right to

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establish their own state, to speak their own language and to live their own culture. We believe (without being uncritical) that it is necessary and right to support the Kurdish national liberation struggle.

7. other problems

There has been much discussion about how to define a nation, that it is in some way tied to an economic area, a territory, a language and a particular culture that have developed historically.

We don't want to go into this debate in detail now. But we do want to say that, from our point of view, a very complicated situation has arisen historically in Africa in particular as a result of the borders drawn by the imperialist superpowers, or more precisely the colonialist superpowers, and we simply have no position on the many, many individual cases. We can only hope that, with basic democratic convictions, the majority of the population in the various regions of Africa will find an acceptable solution themselves and not allow themselves to be set against each other and

embroiled in wars by the imperialist superpowers.

Today, German nationalism is the number one instrument for ideologically influencing the mass of the population in Germany.

It is directed more and more clearly against anyone who is not considered "originally German" in Germany. Regardless of whether and for how long they live and work in Germany or whether they are fleeing oppression, exploitation and persecution or are simply looking for work - they are the hate object of German national ideology and agitation, the German national master race mentality of German imperialism and its political parties.

"War on the German conditions!"

This slogan by Karl Marx from 1844 is still highly topical!