

## **...To The Whole!**

### **Smash Capitalism. Fight the G8 Summit.**

With "Growth and Responsibility" as a guiding theme the Germany summit of the G8 (Group of the 7 most powerful states plus Russia) will take place at the Baltic Sea village Heiligendamm from June 6th - 8th 2007. When such empty phrases - probably safeguarding the sad existence of a whole legion of PR-specialists - are presented the public, it becomes obvious to the most people: Propaganda takes over. What kind of real political importance the g8 gathering has, not even the inner circle representatives is likely certain about. To attach a greater weight the G8 summits comparing to the World Trade Organization (WTO) or the World Bank for their role in global capitalism seems questionable; just as a left agitation, that asserts, the claim of the officials to focus on the solutions of pressing world problems is a simple "lie".

The Group of Eight is not "like the spider in the web" nor the "distributing center" of "predatory capitalism". Rather the G8 summit must be conceived as a form in which capitalist society reflects itself in the political. And it is therefore we call for an irreconcilably act of negation. Such a political practice does not aim at the "One Family" of the defrauded and the disappointed, but at the possibility of bringing the scandal capitalism in its totality into the focus of critique: to criticize its structures in institutions and in our heads and to develop a perspective beyond domination, violence, repression and exploitation.

*„It seems to be easier for us today to imagine the thoroughgoing deterioration of the earth and of nature than the breakdown of late capitalism; perhaps that is due to some weakness in our imagination.“ (Fredric Jameson)*

### **Moving targets**

Society is more than just the sum of its members: Its specific lies in the overbalance of social forms and relationships that structure and organize the connections of the individuals to each other. To conceive the capitalist mode of production as a dominant structure-principle corresponds to the necessity of every change-targeting practice, to render account of the understanding of existing society. Thereby we must consider that current societies are nerved by a number of domination and power relationships such as asymmetric gender relations, racism and anti-Semitism or the discrimination of certain sexual orientations.

Instead of a narrow minded thinking in "main" and "side" contradictions it is necessary for an adequate understanding of capitalism to ask, how these different forms relate to and involve each other. The prevalent lack of clarity about the development of the capitalist domination system should not lead to the fallacy, to postpone the question of practice and organization to a point of time where theory might be "fully developed". The fear to be mistaken is the mistake itself. Even if the good intention does not justify every mistake, the necessity for action is owed to the unreasonableness of the social condition itself: The contradiction between the unprecedented material wealth - the real potentiality of human freedom - and the impositions and catastrophes that the capitalist force of value realization constantly produces, should be reason enough to give way to open rebellion. Just because "protest" is not emancipatory per se but can also be supremely reactionary, a radical left is obligated to more than mere "intervention". An intervention without a critical definition of one's own standpoint is less than a sad 'being part of' - it turns itself into a tool for the wrong purpose.

*"The sphere of circulation or commodity exchange, within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labor-power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. It is the exclusive realm of Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, let us say labor-power, are determined only by their own free will. They contract as free persons who are equal before the law. Their contract is the final result in which their joint will finds a common legal expression. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to his own advantage. The only force bringing them together, and putting them into relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interest of each. Each pays heed to himself only, and no one worries about the others. And precisely for that reason, either in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an omniscient providence, they all work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal, and in the common interest." (Karl Marx)*

## Illegal, legal, scheißegal: G8 legitimate!

To take the Germany Summit of the G8 as a cause for radical social critique demands a double apology. Against the critical critics of all protest identified with the anti-globalization movement the civil standpoint needs to be asserted: As the heads of state who gather in Heiligendamm apprehend themselves as representatives of the people's sovereignty, the protest of "the people" is consequently an absolute legitimate matter. Formally it is neither a priori reactionary nor latently anti-Semitic but carried out entirely within a bourgeois-civil paradigm. Against the popular opinion among the antiglobalization movement, the summits would be illegitimate in the sense of 'undemocratic', we should also - with Marx - take note of the realities of bourgeois society: Not just a gang of robber-knights but in fact representatives of constitutional states with basic laws and acknowledged proceedings of legitimation come together at the summit. As juristic persons states can "freely" and "equally" arrange informal meetings and close contracts - following the logic. Instead of forging alternative models of democracy and law an emancipatory movement should recognize that domination and exploitation in capitalism are performed not primary against law and democracy but within these forms.

As 'state under the rule of law' the bourgeois state treats every citizen as a free and equal proprietor: All citizens are subjected to the same rights and duties. The state protects the property of every citizen, independently from the person's standing. This protection consists in the first place in the fact that all citizens are pledged to reciprocally acclaim each other as proprietors. The state conducts to the single citizens in fact as a neutral instance; this neutrality is not just appearance. Right by dint of this neutrality the state secures the basis of capitalist relations of domination and exploitation. The protection of private property implicates that those who do not own any (relevant) property besides their working power must sell their working power. In order to make a living they have to comply to capital.

This insight has large scale consequences for the mobilization against the G8 summit. First of all it implies an explicit refusal of economic and personalized (state-)conceptions: The first wants to directly debunk the state as a mere tool of the economically dominant class - to demand its 'right' use for the common good in circular reasoning, the second primary conceives the condition of the world as a result of individual misconduct of single capitalists and politicians acting out of greed, venality or an absent sense of responsibility. Varieties of these ideological forms range from anti-Americanism to anti-Semitic stereotypes. Less reactionary but similarly problematic is the moral conviction of certain companies and multinational corporations, whose practices are - often rightly - stigmatized as especially abhorrent. What falls out of this perspective is a critique on the plain vanilla exploitation - practiced by every capitalist. Furthermore the notion misconceives that even the capitalists are driven through competition by the objective force of capitalist value realization. The process of concentration and centralization of capital is insofar a structurally caused moment of the dynamic of capital accumulation. That's why it would be ludicrous for instance to demand "fair competition" against the 'power of corporations' or to classify capital under the motto small = good and large = evil with sympathy points.

*"The state always translates the objective 'character of constraint' of social reproduction into political form. In times of crisis and social disturbance this appears crude and disembellished; it is also expressed in the preventive strategies aiming to contain crisis or to better administrate it. But it also applies to the 'normal case' of peaceful and pacified reproduction performed within and by means of its institutions."* (Johannes Agnoli)

To conceive 'rule of law' as a specific form of capitalist domination, does certainly not mean that within capitalism legal norm and legal practice, ideal and reality are always in accord with each other. That on an empirical level not only several capitalists and but also institutions of constitutional states are using illegal practices - declaring rotten meat as fresh produce, disposing toxic waste in Africa, killing trade unionists, practicing torture, etc. - has been widely scandalized. A political movement that primary criticizes what is generally defined as "criminal", how even, rather acts on a critique level of an attorney. The fallacy of such a position admittedly is: The world would be alright if just everybody respects the law.

If we don't want to put the fox in charge of the henhouse, a materialistic critique needs to grasp deeper: The bourgeois state is not just a constitutional state that solely provides a formal frame and protects the abidance of this frame by its monopoly on the use of force. It also secures the general material conditions of capital accumulation, in case these conditions can not be prepared by the single capitalists. This ranges from the school system, over infrastructure, to the martial enforcement of national interests. There shouldn't be any illusions about this either - without lapsing in bromidic 'antiimperialism'.

As an 'ideal personification of the total national capital' the state needs to assert itself from time to time against the conflicting interests to ensure a general capital accumulation in the long run. By its structural dependency on tax revenue it is doing so in addition out of mere self-interest, as every politician learns: 'Only when economy is doing well the state is doing fine.' This structural

connection is often faded out within the left debate, for instance when the perspectives of reformist parties are discussed.

*“Rational is the imagination which become the a priori of the reconstruction and redirection of the productive apparatus toward a pacified existence, a life without fear. And this can never be the imagination of those who are possessed by the images of domination and death. [...] Thus again the question must be faced: how can the administrated individuals – who have made their mutilation into their own liberties and satisfactions, and thus reproduce it on an enlarged scale – liberate themselves from themselves as well as from their masters?” (Herbert Marcuse)*

### **Now I'll throw myself upon you**

In capitalism the economical actors are following a rationality that is forced upon them by the economical relations themselves. With mankind, it is behaving like in Goethe's "Sorcerer's Apprentice": The forces that were called to free oneself from exhausting drudgery – to ensure survival in a violent nature – have hived off and control the controller. Even the capitalist is damned by the band of competition to make profit or to perish. Facing war, terror and the pauperization of complete world-regions, civilization continually stands stunned in front of the results of its own dynamic. Goethe's old master sorcerer, who ends the bad wizardry and liberates the apprentice out of his awkward situation, would be in a contemporary reading in fact neither the clever bourgeois nor the strong state. The ability to subordinate the means to a reasonable purpose, or better said, to install man as the subject of its own, self-determined history, this master skill would not meet with the praise on class society and its inherent necessities. Quite the contrary: As a symbol for the abolition of a relationship of constraint he rather is more alike Marx' spectre of communism. 'Contemporary' would mean here indeed to contradict the prevailing zeitgeist: Against the dictatorship of the production over needs, to demand the primacy of the needs over the production.

Despite all unreasonableness it seems as if capitalism currently just returns to its 'normality' – with growing capitalist centers producing an ever-increasing wealth and a belt of poverty whose size and constitution may differ considerably from country to country. The fact of 14.000 kids dying daily on the results of hunger and malnutrition leaves no doubt on how violently capitalism presents itself on a global scale. However, it would be wrong to conceive the immediate violence as the authentic essence of capitalism. Rather what should be recognized is the 'Janus-headedness' of modern capitalism between 'primitive accumulation', world-order-war and violent crisis intervention on the one side and civilized and legal exploitation 'sealed and signed' on the other. Neither the one should be reduced to the other, nor should their qualities be equated. Nevertheless, both must be understood as two sides of one medal.

The debate on the "return of poverty", on "precariat" and "underclass" even in the industrialized countries reflects that also within the capitalist centers the struggle for social participation and for the way society's wealth is generated is not standing still. On the chase for ever-increasing profits capitalism is forced to revolutionize its mode of production constantly. The creation of an "industrial reserve army" and the cancellation of 'class compromises' are not at all new in the history of capitalism, even when the specific changes in the mode of production modify the specific requirements for the subjects: While fordism placed emphasis on the reliable mass-worker, who had to function but was released from entrepreneurial issues, today - a new form of employee is demanded. The human being in neo-liberalism is fully bound into the production process and with by the sound of the company's for long not released from the contract: Off-the-job training, unpaid engagement during spare time, joint responsibility and 'flat hierarchies' in companies are catchwords of the current discussion. Full disposability and identification of the exploited subjects with the interests of the employer are main features of this process. Biographies of workers earning a crust for decades in one and the same dive will be rare in future. The neo-liberal human must "run, drudge, rush" and is supposed to be "fit, flexible and fantastic" to match with the requirements of the market. Who does not conform to these criteria has to be prepared for a living at the margin of subsistence. The dictation is: To squarely align your life to be applicable for capitalist value realization any time and any place.

*“We do not argue to have the monopoly on intelligence but surely on its use. Our position is one of strategy – we stand in the center of every conflict. The qualitative is our force de frappe.” (Situationist International)*

## **[Organize]**

The “cracks in the neo-liberal hegemony” often stated within the anti-G8 mobilization - in contrast - rather appear like the operation sound of the capitalist machinery of value realization than a way out of capitalist insanity. Those who do not want to mix up islamists, neo-nazis, soil-free peasants, welfare recipients and fare dodgers in one subversive mass (and in doing so equalizing them as they all got something against neo-liberalism), will come to a lowly result. While the contradictions of capitalism can be experienced in daily life, as a complex social relationship of domination capitalism withdraws itself from every-day-life’s consciousness. To introduce radicalness to the struggles against G8 does target on more than a ritualized gesture. Instead of subordinating everything to strategy, it is the adequate insight of social power and the determination of its sublation what radicalness is heading to. The “leap to the realm of freedom” requires a self-reflective breach with the social-democratic salvation-promise as well with a belief in a historic automatism – following that capitalism must necessary collapse ‘out of itself’.

Thus it should be adhered: Capitalism is a social relationship – produced by humans – and as such can also be transcended by humans. The critique of capitalist modes of production therefore must also be a critique of ideological forms of thinking in which the historically developed and socially produced is reversed and hived off in human’s minds to the seemingly pristine, natural or god-given. For the mobilization to the G8 protests this means to give short shrift to the right- and left-jerking franticness towards the abstract as well to the sense-makings of “ethnicity”, “nation”, “religion” or “culture”. As civil values should be defended against any backslide into barbarism, it would be equally wrong, however, to transfigure them affirmatively or to release oneself from the critique of domination in a neoconservative manner. This would mean to throw out the baby with the bath water.

While talking about revolution seems to be pretty naive today, it appears to be even more stupid to waste all of one’s abilities to arrange oneself with the bad existing as the global development of capitalism strikes any definition of a reasonable purpose. The G8 summit should be taken as a cause to go the whole hog with the critique of capitalism – not because the G8 is the personified evil but rather because domination in capitalism basically has neither name nor address. The ‘right place’ for anti-capitalist resistance is never immediately given. The rightness is defined exclusively by the dimension in which out of the experience of social contradictions the insight in the necessity grows to “overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, abandoned, despicable essence.”

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## **The “...ums Ganze!” Alliance**