

Women in Sudan: „We won't be silent in the face of the tyrant“ (Alaa Salah)

by Clay Ikarus, *Revolution Deutschland*, in *Fight! Revolutionary Women's Magazine*, 13, März 2025

In 2019, thousands of voices responded to activist Alaa's promise with "Thawra!" (Arabic for "Revolution!"). Today, Sudan has been embroiled in a bitter war for almost two years, keeping the entire population in a state of fear and terror. Women and children are particularly suffering from the current situation. Most recently, reports of a mass suicide of Sudanese women fearing sexual violence shocked the media. But how did it come to this, and how can the struggle for liberation evolve?

A brief historical overview

The history of the Sudanese civil war began in 2018/19. The dictator Omar al-Bashir (also: Umar al-Bashir) was in power at the time and wanted to introduce massive austerity measures. This was the last straw, as the population was already facing several crises: a housing shortage, a broken health and education system, and most ATMs were empty, so people couldn't access their money. Meanwhile, any political opposition activity was violently suppressed. Nevertheless, the masses took to the streets. The initial demonstrations and strikes, initiated by the SPA (Sudanese Professionals Association, an umbrella organization of 17 individual unions), grew into a movement of resistance fighters who organized themselves in neighborhoods across the cities. They succeeded in overthrowing the dictator. Women were at the forefront of this movement, making up more than half of the protesters. They also became the face of the movement internationally. Some may remember the famous image of Alaa Salah, a

23-year-old student who motivated the crowds. She later spoke as a representative of Sudanese civil society before the UN Security Council, demanding that those responsible for the old regime be held accountable.

The revolution improved the situation of women in Sudan. The Public Order Law, which not only suppressed political struggles but also dictated women's behavior and dress code, was abolished. The practice of female genital mutilation was criminalized. However, even though the revolution was mainly carried out by women, they did not achieve full equality in the new transitional civilian government under Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok. Only a fifth of the cabinet was made up of women, even though fifty percent had been demanded. With the implementation of economic reforms dictated by Sudan's foreign creditors, Hamdok gradually lost more and more of his support among the population.

Unfortunately, the history of the Arab Spring repeated itself in Sudan. The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under the leadership of General Abdel Fattah Burhan, which supported the revolution and promised to oversee the transition to a democratic system, ultimately turned against the civilian government. Together with his deputy Hamdan Daglo, lieutenant general of the paramilitary unit RSF (Rapid Support Forces; Islamist paramilitary group), they overthrew Abdalla Hamdok in 2021 and introduced a military regime that ruled with violence and crushed the achievements of the revolution.

Unfortunately, the massive protests against this military coup came too late. The civil revolution ended in a counterrevolution. We must not forget that Saudi Arabia and Egypt provided significant support to the military in Sudan, as they had hired Sudanese mercenaries for their own war in Yemen and were financed by the US with several billion dollars.

Sudan itself is only part of the arc of crisis that stretches westward across the Sahel zone and also includes Chad, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. These countries have experienced military coups that

have massively weakened French hegemony or replaced it with others—militarily, often with Russian involvement, and economically through China. In the east, this arc of crisis even extends to the states on the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia are strategically located on the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which connects the Indian Ocean with the Red Sea and from there with the Suez Canal. Twenty percent of the world's container ship traffic passes through this strait. It is no wonder that rival imperialist groups also want access to Sudan's geostrategic location on the Red Sea, and obviously also to its resources. Once again, it is US imperialism and its allies, competing with Russia and China, as well as the involvement of regional powers such as Saudi Arabia, which supplies weapons to the RSF: they have all interfered in Sudan and ultimately want to see their warring faction ruling over Sudan in their interests from a throne built on corpses.

The current civil war

In April 2023, the conflict between the SAF and the RSF escalated, leading to an ongoing war and one of the world's largest humanitarian crises. Entire neighborhoods and villages have already been destroyed by the fighting. More than 14 million people have been forced to leave their homes, over 40 percent of farmland is uncultivated, causing the country's wheat production to decline by 75 percent. Twenty-six million people, about half the population, are suffering from famine. Tens of thousands of civilians have already been killed and many more injured. The atrocities committed against the courageous and militant women of Sudan are particularly alarming. They are subjected to torture and mass rape. The fear of this drives them to suicide. On one day, more than 100 women took their own lives at the same time to escape this fate. The RSF is particularly notorious for this violence against civilians. They repeatedly take women and children hostage, torture and kill them.

In addition, medical care has largely collapsed, leading to a

massive increase in the spread of diseases: cholera, malaria, dengue fever, measles, and rubella are now causing death alongside hunger and war. At a donor conference in Paris in April 2024, €2 billion in aid was pledged. Not only is this insufficient, but the supplies are intercepted by the warring parties and do not reach the population.

But what about liberation?

Unfortunately, the revolution failed due to the same problems that plagued the Arab Spring: as long as the army's high command, the Islamist parties and the state bureaucracy remain intact, the danger of a counterrevolution persists. What is needed is a revolution that goes all the way, smashes the repressive power of the state, takes control of the economy from the corrupt capitalist class, and puts power in the hands of the working people. This means that democracy alone cannot survive; a socialist revolution in the sense of permanent revolution is necessary, because the imperialist world system will always try to make Sudan a pawn in its own game. The people in all these countries have already proven that they have the courage and the power to overthrow dictatorships. They have learned to organize themselves into resistance units and have thus defied entire armies. It is necessary to rebuild this strength, to network across national borders, and to resume the struggle for liberation. In doing so, it is important to learn from the mistakes of the past and not repeat them. The goal of a popular front with the bourgeois forces must be discarded and replaced by the creation of a revolutionary program and a party for the workers.

In Sudan, this means that people within the military forces must raise their weapons against their corrupt generals, and workers must collect every weapon they can find and reorganize themselves underground. Workers in neighboring countries must also reorganize themselves and take up the struggle so that they can support their class brothers and sisters in Sudan. However, this process must be

linked to a revolutionary program in order to be successful. It is therefore necessary to oppose any imperialist intervention, to have aid deliveries to the population monitored by committees to ensure fair distribution, and to convene a constituent assembly that places the means of production under the control of the workers.

For us in the Western countries, it is important to fight against any interference by our states in the uprisings in African and Arab countries and to seek solidarity with Sudanese activists. Together, we must oppose all economic embargoes that weaken the Sudanese economy and dismantle dependencies that arise from so-called development aid from Western countries. Instead, Sudanese society should draw up a reconstruction plan that demands reparations and ensures that these demands are met. Together with the unions, we must stop our governments from supplying weapons to warmongers, whether in Sudan, Yemen, or Gaza!

Solidarity with Serbian students protests

REVOLUTION delegation to Serbia, April 2025

Students in Serbia have been protesting for months. Universities are occupied, streets are blocked and the population is showing enormous solidarity. We went to see this by ourselves.

What is going on in Serbia?

The trigger for the current protests was the collapse of a train station canopy in Novi Sad on November 1, 2024, killing 15 people. This is part of a Chinese-led modernization project for Serbia's rail infrastructure. Since the

documents for this are classified as sensitive, the movement accuses the government of corruption. Such and similar corruption is omnipresent in Serbian politics. Whether in elections, foreign investment or construction projects.

But why is that?

The government and its relatively directly subordinate authorities have no interest in the well-being of the population, but want to stuff money into their own pockets. This is not personal misbehaviour, but a logical result of Serbia's semi-colonial position in the capitalist world system. Since Serbian capitalists cannot compete with powers like Germany or China on their own, the Serbian economy is de facto dominated by them. Those in power themselves vie with each other to see how they can best divide the share that the imperialist corporations give to them.

Thus, Serbia's role as a semi-colony means that the Serbian government has to maneuver between the interests of the EU, China and Russia, and has to make concessions to each side. As a result, China enforces Chinese rather than Serbian law in its mines in Serbia, and the EU is buying lithium in Serbia's Jadar Valley to become less dependent on other world powers in the future. The resulting corrupt system means that the lives of the people, who are exploited twice, by imperialist capital and by the corrupt Serbian bourgeoisie and their administrators, are confronted with numerous problems.

The health system is ailing, and corruption also reigns there. You can only get a doctor's appointment if you can pay money on the side. There are no pharmacies in rural areas, and due to the lack of adequate standards in the training of pharmacists, it is a matter of luck whether you get the right medication or not. The construction sector is just as corrupt, which is what led to the train crash in Novi Sad. Living costs are constantly rising, the education system is massively underfunded and, in schools, it primarily serves to propagate a Serbian nationalist ideology. Dissatisfaction is correspondingly high, especially among young people. **The movement certainly has its work cut out.**

And they are tackling it: almost every university in the big cities is occupied, and every day there are plenary sessions in which students discuss actions and much more. There is strong support among the population: older people are also collecting donations for the universities. There are road blockades and even marches and bicycle tours from city to city, taking the protests to the countryside. Hundreds of thousands of people took part in a large demonstration in Belgrade on March 15! The government tried to appease the movement by resigning Prime Minister Vučević and making other concessions. But the movement insists on its demands and wants to build even more pressure! They are currently beginning to network with various trade unions for a general strike. The movement is a threat to the government and potentially to the entire Serbian system. That is why there have been arrests and attacks on the protests by members of the government from the SNS party and other right-wingers.

The movement is one of the largest in Europe's recent history and has been paralyzing the country for months. To avoid ending in failure, the movement must increase its pressure, as with the general strike, and build countervailing power structures. There are already attempts at this, with students organizing their own improvised television channel.

The movement is very radical in its practice, and this must be reflected in its demands! Their demands for the investigation of the station canopy collapse in Novi Sad are not enough to end corruption. They must expose the economic origin of corruption and fight nationalism in their own ranks. So far, Serbian nationalist bourgeois forces have taken up a lot of space, and left-wing forces are very weakly represented, partly due to the limited freedom of organization. They must network with workers, because only they can bring the government to its knees economically. Furthermore, the bourgeois opposition and the capital interests of China and the EU must be exposed! A system without corruption and without exploitation can only be achieved through the power of workers, youth and their organized structures!

How can we support the movement here?

We have to expose the interests of the EU, German and Austrian capital in Serbia: Austria, for example, benefits from Serbian migrants, who can be exploited to the full because the standard of living in Serbia is significantly lower and they still earn more with poor wages in Austria than with mediocre wages in Serbia. Erste Bank and Co. as well as, to an even greater extent, the capital of the imperialist great power Germany are making profits in Serbia. We have to attack that! **The main enemy is in our own countries!**

And we can also learn from the students in Serbia for our struggles in Austria and Germany! They confirm the strength of what we at REVOLUTION have been politically proposing for a long time, but which is hardly present in the left: that it is politically correct and necessary to organize where you are anyway, where your own place in the system is, and to start the fight there. That's exactly what the Serbian students are doing, occupying their faculties and making demands according to their respective professions. On this basis, they organize the protests and the students of all faculties are in solidarity with each other. A movement with a similar structure, fighting at school, university and workplace, making its demands for school, university and workplace and winning the masses locally on this basis, can also get hundreds of thousands onto the streets of Vienna and Berlin, thereby putting Stocker and Merz under great pressure!

We therefore demand:

- Imperialist powers: Get out of Serbia!
- Down with Vucic! For a transitional government made up of student and worker structures and a constituent assembly!
- Long live international solidarity! The struggle of Serbian students is our struggle too! Let's take it to our universities, schools, colleges and workplaces too!

Why there is an international shift to the right?

By Lia Malinovski, REVOLUTION Magazine, December 2024

The fact that more and more fellow students are spouting right-wing nonsense and teachers laugh about it is not only the case in a Germany, where the AfD has nationwide support of over 17%. In Italy Georgia Meloni, the head of the government, comes from a fascist tradition and has aligned herself with a neoliberal right-wing populism. Javier Milei is attacking the working class and youth in Argentina, Donald Trump has won the election in the USA, and in France the ultra-right Rassemblement National has won 30% of the votes. In the following, we want to examine the reasons for the success of the right and the dimensions of the current rise of right-wing politics, so that we can effectively fight it!

A shift to the right means militarism!

Last year, all imperialist states together invested more money in their armies and weapon systems than ever before. While hardly anyone cares about any UN resolutions anymore, all states that can afford it are increasing their military budgets. In Ukraine and Gaza, we already see the horrific violence to which the growing tensions between world powers can lead. Taiwan and the Pacific are also places, where these tensions could quickly lead to military conflict in the future.

But those who arm themselves externally against the apparent external enemy must also arm themselves against the alleged “internal enemies”. Parallel to special funds for the military, there are also more funding for the police and attacks on democratic rights such as freedom of demonstration or freedom of the press. We see this, for example, in the fact that in Germany all

those who dared to speak out for peace in Ukraine or in Gaza and thus contradicted the German war plans in the respective region, have been branded as traitors of the nation, friends of Putin or even anti-Semites. The ideological incitement is accompanied by demonstrations being banned or attacks on the right of asylum.

The background of the global militarization internally and externally is the economic crisis and an intensified formation of blocs between the imperialist powers. In view of unclear profit prospects, the imperialist powers are increasingly relying on military strength. We are currently in a so-called overproduction or over-accumulation crisis. This means, among other things, that investments that companies have made are no longer profitable and they remain stuck with the expenses. Furthermore, more has been produced than can be sold on the market, which also fuels the crisis. This over-accumulation crisis has now also affected China, unlike a few years ago. The precursors of the current crisis, the financial crisis of 2007-08, have caused a faltering and even a partial reversal of globalization. Instead, trade conflicts are increasing and imperialist blocs are emerging. The USA is on the decline as the world's dominant power and its supremacy in the world is no longer unchallenged. This results in an ever harder struggle between the imperialist blocs for the redivision of the world, that is, for spheres of influence and markets. In this struggle, it is becoming apparent that the main contradiction is between the USA and China, and that Russia and the EU (including British imperialism) must subordinate themselves to these two. Examples of this are the protective tariffs on Chinese electric cars, which the USA has raised to 100% and the EU to up to 35%. An economic war is breaking out that is plunging the relative stability of recent decades into chaos.

A shift to the right means austerity!

However, the costs of the crisis are not being paid by those who gambled away and lined their pockets with war and exploitation. No, they are dumped on us young people, queers, migrants and the entire working class. We see this in the fact that wages are being eaten up by inflation and rents almost everywhere in the world. That the welfare state is being cut back and our

schools and youth clubs are falling into disrepair. International economic growth is forecast to be just 3%, and for Germany it is expected to be just above 0%. This puts us internationally on the brink of stagnation, which could quickly lead to a recession. Capital reacts to this with social cuts, attacks on wages and working conditions, and mass layoffs.

Alongside the proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie is also affected by the crisis. It is being crushed between the main classes of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and is therefore becoming the main social support of the right-wing parties internationally. They are drowning in global competition and fear relegation to the proletariat. They have economic existential fears, feel betrayed by the “elites” (on whom they could always rely), and are envious that they are only saving monopoly capital in the crisis. They want to go back to the “good old days” before the crisis and secure their position in the domestic market by closing the borders.

More and more sections of society are being driven into poverty and destitution by the crisis, inflation and state austerity policies. But instead of resisting this with a progressive vision of a different society, more and more sections of society are looking to the right for answers to their problems. This is because left-wing parties and trade unions have failed to counter the attacks of capital in recent years. After the financial crisis of 2007/08 initially triggered strong social movements, as in Greece or in the Arab countries, but these have suffered severe defeats. And even the trade unions and social democrats, who only want to make the crisis more socially acceptable instead of fighting against capital, have less and less leeway to distribute. This is followed by a loss of members, a decline in fighting strength and thus less room for maneuver to counter the attacks of capital. For us young people, the defeat of the climate movement was certainly also formative, leaving many previously active people disillusioned and frustrated.

A shift to the right means racism and

sexism!

In this context, populism manages to obscure the class antagonisms with its talk of the “people” fighting against “the elites” and thus strengthen the bourgeoisie. It is also associated with nationalism and social chauvinism. They say we have to take action against the “foreign elements” in an otherwise good capitalism. In reality, these are often leftists, migrants, queers, refugees, and unemployed people. They want to turn back the wheel of time to a time before the great crisis, when there were supposedly no refugees, no emancipated women, and no queer gender identities.

Racism, sexism and homophobia are important tools for those in power to deflect the frustration of the masses from themselves. At the same time, the economic crisis requires the poorer countries to be exploited more fiercely. To justify this, their populations must be declared inferior with the help of racism. Even if people have to flee to richer countries due to war, arms exports, natural disasters and economic crises, this ideology works. The AfD, CDU and the former coalition government are currently overtaking each other with increasingly inhuman attacks on refugees and their rights, be it “deportation offensives” or the recently introduced payment card. This poison divides our class and prevents us from defending ourselves internationally against the attacks on all of us.

Who is targeted by the media smear campaigns also depends on the foreign policy interests of the respective states. Thus, anti-Muslim racism is currently gaining in importance. To legitimize the delivery of weapons for the genocide in Gaza, an enormous racist propaganda machine has to be set in motion. What gained momentum on 9/11 is being taken to the extreme today. In German schools, all people in Gaza are allowed to be called terrorists, but criticism of Israel is immediately branded as anti-Semitic and suppressed. Solidarity with Israel is made a prerequisite for citizenship acquisition, and in many media outlets, the lie of imported anti-Semitism is spread.

Where is the shift to the right leading?

Whether Trump or Harris has won in the US, politics will become more right-wing and the conflict with China will continue to escalate. The US will also continue to support Israeli aggression, fight social movements at home and seal off its borders from migrants in a racist manner. In Germany, a government under the CDU and its right-wing figurehead Friedrich Merz is to be expected. Attacks on the right to strike, on the right to demonstrate and on sexual self-determination will be just a few of the expected consequences.

The shift to the right will continue to form and spread in its various dimensions if we do not manage to prove that the solution to the crisis must come from the left. The fight for this begins exactly where you are reading this article. First of all, we have to organize where we spend our days, namely at our schools, universities and workplaces. There we have to build committees to counter the effects of the shift to the right. Only in this way can we manage to draw other sections of society to our side and organize independently of the state. In doing so, we have to fight the attacks of capital with social demands! We need class struggle instead of social partnership like the union bureaucracy and social democratic parties want it. We have to link this with anti-racist demands, because racism weakens our common fighting strength. We will not be divided! Let's fight together against all asylum law restrictions and border regimes and build organized self-defense against the attacks of the right! However, we cannot do all this alone. We must also address our demands to the organizations that organize a large part of the working class - that is, the trade unions and the reformist parties. In joint struggles, we must put pressure on their leaderships to actually stand against the right-wing shift and mobilize their entire membership. Our resistance must be coordinated internationally, because just as the right-wing shift is happening globally, so must our resistance.

Beyond Yes and No: A Communist's Guide to Consent

By J.K. Singh

Talking about sex is hard—but talking about consent is even harder. Between poor sex education and misleading media portrayals, we rarely learn how to communicate boundaries and desires openly. A communist guide on the topic.

We are not taught much in sex education classes at school. We can consider ourselves lucky if we learn how to put condoms on bananas or get handed a tampon. But it's not really that helpful when you're trying to have sex. In class, the focus is on genitals, with the female ones often being misrepresented (for example, the clitoris is not a small spot that is veeeeery hard to find), and homosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality are not really touched upon. Intimacy, responsibility or feelings are hardly ever talked about. Instead, sex education falls back on the wide range of distorted representations of intimacy and sexuality in bourgeois society.

Um, what does that mean?

Whether in movies or series: intimacy is portrayed in extremes. Either the basis is love until the end of the infinite universe, or it's about proving one's own wo

rth by getting someone into bed. There's not much in between. Usually, of course, the man also knows what the woman needs. Without asking, he can just feel that the woman wants to be kissed and, through telekinesis, everything fits together seamlessly until suddenly you're naked - and the woman gets an orgasm from pure penetration. That's the "nice" version; after all, there are still plenty of moments where the woman says no, but the man of course knows very well that this is just a secret code word for "fuck me". Accordingly, he acts on it, and as a spectator, you don't know what to do with the sexual violence you've just seen.

What can happen as a result?

In summary, that doesn't sound very sexy. And it isn't. The idea that you have to "conquer" your love interest leads to many problems in practice. This is how sexual boundaries are crossed and assaults occur. This can happen consciously, for example, if you do not take a "no" as a "no" because you believe that you have to convince the other person. Or unconsciously, when you just do it because you believe that asking is a sign of ignorance and weakness. Likewise, you feel pressured yourself because you are trying to live up to an ideal standard that does not even exist. Thus, sexuality degenerates into an individual performance in which you magically know what the other person is thinking and have to "prove" yourself.

But why is that so?

This is mainly because, in bourgeois society, sex is primarily there to ensure reproduction. For the ruling class, that means offspring to whom they can pass on their property (this inheritance usually takes place through the male line). For the working class, this further secures the existence of the family, which, among other things, is also the place where one can recover and reproduce one's own labor. This may sound quite outdated, but it is the basis on which much is happening today.

Under capitalism, 1. bourgeois states and large corporations are always in economic competition and therefore need as many new workers as possible on the market. And 2., especially in the oppression of women, that they must be pushed into unpaid domestic work and the role of the educator, so that the capitalists have to spend as little as possible on reproductive work - otherwise they would make less profit. Thus, domestic labor is pressed into the private sphere. Both patriarchal inheritance and private reproductive labor ensure that women are supposed to fit into the typical bourgeois family, because only in this way can the man also inherit his property to "his children" and have a place to retreat to in the working class for recreation. Women are degraded to mere birth and child-rearing machines that don't need to enjoy sex. They are supposed to fixate on only one man, whom they love for life, and to justify the fact that they now also have to do most of the

housework (in addition to their jobs) unpaid, they are portrayed as being worth less and more stupid. All of this is reflected in our society. Like housework, sex is increasingly being pushed into the private sphere. The 1968 movement played an important role in pushing back outdated sexual morals, but it was unable to address the fundamental problem. As a result, we now have a more open approach to sexuality in many areas, but this has also led to a liberalization of the sex market with all its negative facets.

This means that sexuality under capitalism is not intended for personal development. Even if it seems that as an individual you can enjoy unlimited freedoms, that is not the point at all. Rather, sexuality is strongly influenced by the fact that existing patterns of oppression such as racism, sexism and LGBTIA+ discrimination are reproduced, which actively prevent us from developing freely and reflecting prejudices. For example, women of colour are often exoticized or there is a very strong focus on the man as the initiator, while the woman is often a silent accessory. Our sex life is therefore always a question of our socialization and cannot be considered separately from society.

What can help?

Feminist movements have developed two concepts in this context. On the one hand, there is the “No means No!” concept. This is based on recognizing a “no” as such, without asking follow-up questions that can build up pressure (Are you sure? Don’t you want to drink more?) and accepting the other person’s boundaries. However, this concept also excludes a few important things. In our society, we are socialized with certain role models. Not everyone finds it equally easy to say “no”. In addition, you only get feedback when it’s too late - that is when you are about to cross a line. That’s why the concept “Yes means yes” was developed. By actively asking a person what they want to do and if they are enjoying themselves, a violation of boundaries can be avoided more easily. Sexual acts are not just a one-way street, after all.

That’s easy to say, isn’t it?

Let's be honest: actively asking is damn hard. The generally existing image of sex in our corner of society tells us that sex is always great and super hot, and that our value is determined by bringing our partner to orgasm without talking. As a result, sex becomes more of an individual achievement and not something that you share. On top of that, there are the stereotypical expectations. In male socialization, asking is considered weak - after all, a "real man" takes what he wants and thus shows his strength. Female socialization is characterized by playing an accepting role, after all, you have to please the guy.

Apart from that, depending on the situation, there are still fears of failure and the fear of being judged for one's own needs. All in all, this results in a cocktail of doubts that is not easy to swallow. So no. Actively asking questions or talking about your own sexual desires is damn hard for many of us. It's uncomfortable, embarrassing and you're afraid. But it's worth it. The only question is:

Where do you even start?

Confronting yourself?

Learning to reach sexual consent doesn't happen overnight, it's a process. Start by confronting yourself: examine your own needs, your own desires, your own limits. If you've never done this before, it's probably quite difficult. Female socialization and some mental illnesses make it more difficult to deal with. In practice, this can mean asking yourself questions and answering them one by one. For example: Am I good at saying "no" and "yes"? Can I accept myself? What do I actually feel like, what do I want to experience? Am I afraid of rejection? If so, what does that do to me?

In addition, it can help to put in the work to accept your body. Social beauty ideals can exert huge pressure: whether it's breasts that are "too large" or a penis that is "too small", 99% of all people do not feel comfortable in their own skin. This automatically also affects how we feel about others. You should be aware of this and start to critically question existing beauty ideals.

And lastly: seriously talk with friends about sexuality. It may sound strange to

talk about it with people you don't want to be intimate with, but exchanging ideas with others can show you what boundaries look like for others or that you may not be alone with your fears and difficulties. This is especially difficult in male circles of friends, because there is a great inhibition to talk about feelings and especially in school sexuality is something that is used to distinguish oneself. But that can be dealt with too. It may help to discuss it in a conversation with a particularly good friend, as opposed to a group. If there is no way to talk to friends about it, you can look for other ways. For example, talking to your parents if they are relatively open-minded or, if nothing else works, you can also try to see a psychologist. Contrary to popular clichés, they are not only there for mental illnesses, but also for simple mental problems.

Even if it sounds exhausting, it is worth trying these steps and developing further. Finding out your own needs, limits and desires - and then being able to express them - is a good basis for seeking conversation with others.

Where do you start as a couple?

In reality, your heart is beating wildly and you're not quite sure what's happening and somehow you end up kissing. Or you're drunk at a party. But rarely have you taken the time to ask what the other person wants. You haven't learned that either. But it's not as hard as it may seem. A good starting point is to ask how well they can express their own needs and limits. In other words, how easy is it for them to say "no" in specific moments? Is it easy for them to do so, or would a hand signal be better? How do I know what the other person likes? How do you get out of uncomfortable situations? What provides security? What causes fear? What is extremely embarrassing?

The list of questions can be extended by a few more. The rule here is: instead of assuming that you know what you are doing, just ask. On this basis, agreements can be made between people, such as non-verbal communication. Or you may find it difficult to take the initiative and appreciate it when someone else takes it and you want them to follow through - but intentionally and not just out of the blue.

At the same time, one should be aware that there are certain power relations that can distort the answers and stand in the way of dealing with each other as equals. These are often associated with existing mechanisms of oppression, such as sexism or racism, such as typical female socialization, which ensures that one is more likely to accept what the other person does. Other dynamics such as experience gaps, drug use, relationships of dependency (financial, for example) or a large age difference can also lead to one person being attributed more awareness and the other person simply subordinating.

This also means being aware that consent does not always ensure that everything goes smoothly. The “Yes means Yes”-principle is not an abstract, rigid set of rules in this context. While some things are clear, such as “No means No”, sexual consent actually describes a relationship between people who become intimate with each other and can therefore be practised and exercised in very different ways. It’s about trying not to reproduce violence and not just imposing your own needs, but doing what you enjoy together. It’s about knowing and taking into account that socialization and social patterns of oppression exist and can get in the way or make it difficult to access each other. Sometimes you only realize afterwards that the situation didn’t go the way you wanted it to. That can happen, even if you try your best. Sexuality is a field of tension and at the same time there are an incredible number of oppressive moments in our society. That’s why it’s also important to be willing to talk about what you’ve experienced afterwards, to accept criticism and to actively address things you were unsure about yourself. Sex can only be really enjoyable and beautiful for both parties with a basis of cooperation, mutual consideration and trust.

All of this sounds exhausting and not romantic at all!

For some people, it is exhausting to deal with themselves and the needs of others. But if you don’t like hurting others (which is perfectly ok, provided it happens within a consensual framework) and putting your own needs above others, then you realize that this is the most practical way. The idea of romance that we are taught in movies and Netflix shows is based on the fact that it crosses boundaries. And what is romantic about that? It just seems

easier because you avoid the danger of getting rejected. Such statements are just statements with which one wants to be freed from responsibility.

So we all ask for consent and we have a liberated society?

No. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Some people benefit from the current social dynamics. They have no interest in changing anything because to end the root cause of these forms of oppression, they would have to give up their possessions and privileges. The idea that it is okay to sleep with people without asking them for consent stems from patriarchal-capitalist dynamics. And they are reproduced, for example through socialization. In order to change that on a fundamental level, we have to create new material conditions.

So we might as well leave it at that?

No. As revolutionaries, we know that we cannot simply live liberated lives in bourgeois society. After all, we cannot simply get rid of the constraints, such as the one of having to sell our labor power. We can't just wash away the way we were socialized and start over. But we can be aware of the mechanisms within bourgeois society. Actually, this is a must.

After all, we are fighting for a liberated society without exploitation and oppression. This works best when we fight for improvements in the here and now and try to deal with social discrimination, instead of postponing that until "after the revolution". That is why we demand, for example, socialization of housework, because it attacks bourgeois society's sexist material basis and would be an enormous relief for the working class. Furthermore, as an organization, we have decided to actively include sexual consent as part of our debating practice and education. However, this can only be successful on a large scale if we remove the system's basis by banishing the bourgeois family and gender stereotypes to the dustbin of history! We can only do this in a system without wage labor, where decision-making is no longer in the hands of the (mostly male) ruling class. That is why we have to collectively take ownership of production, expropriate the core industries and place them under the democratic planning of the working

class. Only in this way can we collectively determine the reproduction of labor and thus remove the basis for the double exploitation of women, sexism and role clichés.

Right-wing politics is the politics of the rich

By Urs Hecker, January 2025

A few weeks ago, the new US President Donald Trump celebrated his inauguration.

Surrounded by billionaires and representatives of the US bureaucracy, he announced his racist, sexist and nationalist program for the rich. Just one day before, at the official victory party of his election campaign, Elon Musk, the richest man in the world, gave the Hitler salute twice on stage. After his inauguration, there was a flood of authoritarian decrees passed by Congress, representing an in this millennium unprecedented attack on the rights of the socially oppressed. These attacks are very similar to those we could face in Germany under Merz or a future AfD government. So what is their impact and how can we fight back?

Attacks on migrants

Once again, migrants from Latin America are a key target of Trump's attacks. A national emergency has been declared on the border with Mexico, which means that the military can be used against immigrants in the future. Images are already going around the world of migrants in despair at the border between the USA and Mexico. The reason: Trump has simply blocked the app that millions of people used to legally make appointments to cross the border. These people often gave up everything to obtain a US visa, only to be turned away at the border despite having an appointment. This cruelty shows once again that "legal" immigrants are also affected by the attacks of the

right and the hypocrisy of those who deny this and claim that it is only about “illegal immigration”. In addition, Trump wants to abolish another key right of migrants in the USA: Citizenship by birth. This will disenfranchise entire generations of descendants of today’s migrants, who can now remain second-class citizens in the USA forever. But we have to see whether the whole thing is legally valid, as citizenship by birth is a historical cornerstone of US society that will not be easy to cut down.

We are facing something similar in Germany. Apart from the fact that citizenship at birth has never existed here, the major parties are also calling for a tightening of the deadly EU border regime and a restriction of citizenship. Among other things, the CDU is calling for people with dual citizenship to be expatriated if they commit two criminal offenses. This opens the way for the deportation of German citizens and creates two classes among them: the “natural Germans”, who are safe citizens forever, and those who can lose their rights again.

We therefore demand internationally:

- Tear down border fences and walls! Open borders everywhere for everyone!
- Full citizenship rights for everyone in the country in which they live!

Attacks on trans and inter people

Trans people are also heavily under attack by the new president and can probably expect even worse in the future. For example, Trump said at his inauguration: “In the future, there will only be two genders in the USA: Man and woman” and instructed authorities to only recognize male and female gender entries.

Furthermore, in future, the chromosomes or “sex at conception” will determine which gender people have. This not only denies the reality of trans and inter people, it also takes away their right to determine their own body and gender and opens the door to further criminalization. At the same time, we can expect an increase in anti-trans and anti-queer sentiment worldwide and therefore further attacks on trans people and their rights.

The situation is similar in Germany, for example when Friedrich Merz calls for the Self-Determination Act to be withdrawn or the AfD wants to abolish same-sex marriage.

Instead we demand:

-Self-determination over one's own gender identity: for the right to free and unbureaucratic access to official name and civil status changes! Against being forced to state your gender in official documents!

-For self-determination over one's own body: For the right to free and unbureaucratic access to medical gender reassignment!

-Fully legalize intersex: Prohibition of medically unnecessary, cosmetic genital operations on children!

Nationalism and authoritarianism

These attacks are embedded in an increasingly aggressive nationalism, which sometimes appears ridiculous from the outside, and a growing authoritarianism. The Panama Canal should be "reconquered" and Panama is openly threatened with a military attack. In a future conflict with China, this is intended to ensure secure control over this important shipping route, but also means that internal criticism can be suppressed through nationalist furor. The announcement that the Gulf of Mexico is to be renamed the "Gulf of America" seems ridiculous and yet should be taken seriously. This act is of course only intended to distract Americans from the real problems in the country by creating a purely symbolic conflict with foreign countries. Authoritarianism is also already on the rise in the country and is the other side of the measures to enforce the attacks on the oppressed groups. As mentioned above, the military is being unleashed on migrants at the border. In addition, Trump has announced that the death penalty will be enforced more strictly again and also wants to "ensure" that individual states have enough means of killing available. This measure will again primarily affect Black and other racially oppressed people. In addition, the civil service is to be placed more directly under the control of the president and civil servants can be dismissed more easily. An even greater expansion of repressive measures is to be expected in the future.

In Germany, too, the increase in repression is a trend towards a shift to the right, as we can see from the attacks on the Palestine Solidarity movement, as well as intensified attacks against anti-fascists and climate activists. The bourgeois state, whether in Germany, the USA or other Western countries such as Britain, is increasingly relying on autocratic measures and

punishments to enforce its domestic and foreign policy goals against criticism.

We demand against this:

-Stop all imperialist intervention! USA and all other imperialists out of Latin America!

-Abolish the Police: Instead of internal rearmament, invest in education and social welfare at the expense of the rich!

Right-wing politics is the politics of the rich

The fact that Trump was surrounded by the richest people in the world at his inauguration illustrates what must have been clear to us: The politics of the right is the politics of the rich, the capitalists. We also see this when Trump pulls out of the Paris climate agreement again and declares an energy emergency to get even more fossil fuels out of the ground. This policy, which attacks the livelihoods of us all, obviously serves the American oil industry and the rest of the capitalists, who can hope for lower electricity prices as a result. Furthermore, an incredible 500 billion is to be invested in private AI infrastructure, which of course serves the tech billionaires on Trump's side, but is also intended to give the US a advantage in the international battle with China. Further massive tax gifts to companies are planned. For example, Trump announced in Davos that all companies should produce in the USA and receive "the lowest taxes ever". The costs of this will be borne by workers and young people if, for example, the already shitty education system is getting even worse as a result of new social cuts. One method of weakening future resistance to this is the attacks now being carried out by the Trump government. The racism, nationalism and queerophobia spread by the government weaken and divide young people and the working class. The disenfranchisement of migrants means that they are less and less able to participate in economic and political struggles. In Germany, too, one social cut after another is being made in combination with racism. After a no increase of the „Bürgergeld“ (social welfare for unemployed people) despite inflation, the CDU is now threatening to cut it completely for hundreds of thousands of people, while in Berlin the CDU and SPD carried out massive cuts in the youth and cultural sectors.

Don't despair: build a youth movement!

Given the scale of the attack, the (supposed?) strength of the right-wing and billionaire government and the terrible impact on those affected, it's hard not to despair. Many of us have been shocked over the last few days and felt powerless and disbelieving. In Germany, too, the shift to the right seems to progress without any brakes and is threatening the living conditions of us young people.

But isolated and shocked in front of the screens, we don't realize one thing: organized together, we can develop incredible strength! A movement of young people and workers that is anchored in schools, universities and companies can stop the shift to the right. For us as young people, this means that we have to organize ourselves where we have to be every day: Schools. This is where we can reach other young people the best, this is where we feel the effects of the shift to the right the most, this is where we can create an anchor for a future movement. Mobilizations like the one against the AfD in Riesa (huge protests against the parties national conference) show that tens of thousands of us are ready to fight!

Such a movement has to be also international and develop perspectives and strategies together in order to stop the international shift to the right and the major attack by the capitalists. So even if we must first defend ourselves against the local attacks of the rich, these all have the same cause as responses by the rich to the global crisis of capitalism. We can only win if we confront the rich on a global scale with a response from workers and youth to the crisis! This response should take up the already mentioned demands against social oppression and authoritarianism and combine them with social demands:

- Self-defense committees and anti-discrimination offices at school, university and workplaces against social oppression and discrimination!
- Joint antiracist and economic struggle: Refugees into trade unions!
- Hundreds of billions for education and social welfare at the expense of the rich, instead of for armament and as tax gifts to billionaires!