

Bulletin 4/04

Information for the revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist forces of all countries

Excerpts and synopses from "Gegen die Strömung" –
Organ for the building of the Revolutionary Communist
Party of Germany: **October – December 2004**

Published quarterly in Turkish, French, ENGLISH, Spanish, Italian, Dutch and Russian

Appearing in the October leaflet:

On the strike and strike outbreak at Opel:

Twofold lesson

"Between 14th and 21st October 2004, workers at the Opel factory in Bochum took to the streets in protest against threatened mass redundancies. This strike action was initiated and maintained without and against trade union management. Management at IG Metall and the top dogs of the Opel works council were against this autonomous strike from the outset. With the backing of various politicians such as Schartau, Clement and Schröder, they tried to stir up the fear that a strike would bring about the permanent shutdown of the plant. The capitalists' attempts at intimidation – including threats of instant dismissal and damage claims did not deter the workers at Opel. The strike was successfully prolonged for seven days despite the attempts of the worker aristocrats of the works council committee to turn workers against themselves. It wasn't until 21st October that they finally managed to break up the strike, operating jointly with the capitalists with the aid of an undemocratic ballot. A twofold lesson is clear from all of this: Firstly, the strike demonstrated the enormous strength of the workers who fought autonomously. On the other hand, it also showed the tremendous power of trade union management and its apparatus to pacify workers in the service of the capitalists."

After it was revealed that some 12,000 jobs would be cut at Opel in Europe – 3,500 of these in Bochum – some 3,000 workers in Bochum went on strike, which is deemed illegal by German labour law.

Trade union barons, politicians and worker aristocrats against the strike

"Right from the very first day, striking workers were confronted by a united front consisting of trade union leaders, politicians and works council bureaucrats, all of whom agreed on the following: Regardless of everything else, production had to continue."

Solidarity with striking colleagues

"Solidarity with the workers ... is huge... Local people especially showed their support ... whole school classes came ... And colleagues from other factories and other industries ... On a 'day of solidarity' organised across Europe, 50,000 workers from General Motors came out in protest ..."

How the strike ended

A ballot took place in a works meeting stewarded by plant security, in which workers were not allowed to speak:

"The ballot paper is a clever trick. On it appeared the following question: 'Should the works council continue negotiations with management and production be resumed?' ...the option of negotiating while at the same time remaining on strike was not on offer."

Only 1,759 workers from a total of 6,463 voted in favour of the strike.

The fight to save jobs at Opel is not over!

"Workers at the Opel factory in Bochum have shown colleagues in other companies that a

strike without trade union management is both possible and necessary. ...

At the same time it is also true that trade union heads and the worker aristocrats of the works council at Opel have again managed to stifle the worker's struggle ...

All this has shown the enormity of the task facing progressive forces in the factories to combat the impending sense of resignation cultivated by

these appeasers, while at the same time having the staying power to promote the organisation of autonomous cells in the class struggle."

Fight without and against trade union leaders!

The leaflet features the following articles: Nazis demonstrate against Hartz IV • Militant anti-fascist actions in Leipzig on 3rd October: The right response • The filthy German-Chauvinist arguments used in the defence of capitalism

Appearing in the November/December 2004 leaflet:

The Nazi ideology of lives "not worth living":

From discrimination to mass murder

"Nazi crimes directed against people classified by the Nazis as 'lebensunwert' ('unworthy of life') started to take place soon after January 1st 1933. After the racist Sterilisation Law came into effect on 14th July 1933, the Nazis began carrying out brutal compulsory sterilisations, mostly on disabled people.

Nazi mass murder directed against people classified by the Nazis as 'unworthy of life' began in October 1939, shortly after the Nazi invasion of Poland. It was carried out on the basis of 'previous experience' made and the 'data' collected in the course of compulsory sterilisations, and began with the mass murder of disabled infants in hospitals and mass executions by firing squad of disabled adults by the SS. From January 1940, this mass murder had become mass murder with poison gas in specially designed extermination centres in Germany and Austria. It was continued and extended to state institutions and hospitals using enforced starvation, drugs and electric shocks up until May 1945. In total, the Nazis murdered between 200,000 and 270,000 people in Nazi Germany.

The Nazi ideology of 'a life not worth living' was a product of both German and European history – taken from Plato, Luther, even the 'Weimar Republic'. Without an understanding of this background, without understanding that

what the Nazis managed to do was to latch onto existing reactionary ideas, bring them to the forefront and to apply them in 'practice' with the help of the state apparatus of German imperialism, it is difficult, nigh impossible, to comprehend the true extent to which this tradition has been retained in post-war West Germany/Germany: The climate of living '... as if nothing had ever happened!' The majority of Nazi murderers were either exonerated or escaped punishment in West Germany. Some even started new 'careers', and the victims who had managed to survive were discriminated against once more. The West German state and the German imperialists refused and continue to refuse to pay victims any compensation which is even remotely fair!"

Mass compulsory sterilisations and Nazi mass murder

The first main section briefly describes the stages of development of murderous Nazi 'euthanasia'.

• State-run compulsory sterilisations from 1933 were a "test run for Nazi mass murder"

This section considers three essential Nazi laws of which the "**Law for the Prevention of Genetically Diseased Offspring**" and the Nazi "**Hereditary Health Laws**" were the most important.

"The medium term objective was to sterilise between half a million and 2 million people, the Nazi ideologue Fritz Lenz even spoke of 12 million."

Advertisement:

BOOKSTORE Georgi Dimitroff
Speyerer Str. 23, 60327 Frankfurt/M. (Germany)
Open: Saturdays 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

German doctors aided and carried out compulsory sterilisations

"In total, around 375,000 to over 400,000 people were compulsory sterilised in Nazi Germany and the annexed territories, Austria, the 'Sudetenland', Danzig and the 'Memel region' between 1933 and 1945 ..."

As a direct result 5,000 – 6,000 women and 600 men were murdered.

• Nazi mass murder began in October 1939

This section describes the development of Nazi murder of people deemed 'lebensunwert':

Mass murder of babies, infants and children from October 1939

"In the Frankfurt 'Euthanasia trial' of 1962, the number of victims was estimated to be at least 5,000. Other estimates put the figure at up to 8,000."

SS mass murder by firing squad from October 1939

"Even by October 1939, the 'Eimann' SS unit had murdered at least 3,500 disabled and sick people ..."

Mass murder through poison gas in institutions of murder from January 1940

"The smooth-running Nazi machinery of destruction murdered at least 80,000 to over 90,000 sick and disabled persons mainly in Germany and Austria between January 1940 and August 1941. Estimates put the number of Jewish victims at 4,000 – 5000. According to estimates, approximately 10,000 to 20,000 mentally disabled persons were murdered in Poland and the USSR before 1945. This figure included many Jews, Cinti and Roma."

"Operation 14f13" March 1941 – March 1943 – The murder of concentration camp prisoners with poison gas

"After March 1941, both the SS and the Nazi 'T4' organisation (T4 was the Nazi organisation which planned and carried out the mass murder of seriously ill and handicapped people) picked out prisoners, mostly the seriously ill and disabled but also Jews, from the concentration camps of Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Mauthausen, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, Wewelsburg, Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen – other concentration camps after 1941 – and murdered them with poison gas in the gas chambers of these extermination centres."

Extension and increase in the numbers of mass murders through enforced starvation, drugs, venous air injections, and electric shocks between June 1941 and May 1945

"During the verdict of the Nuremberg Trials against the major Nazi war criminals in October 1946, the total number of victims murdered in Nazi Germany and countries occupied by the Nazis through Nazi 'euthanasia' was put at over 270,000. Today's estimates put the total at over 200,000 victims."

Discrimination and suppression up to 1933

The second section examines the pre-history of Nazi 'euthanasia', covering the following issues:

• Ideological precursors and starting points of the Nazi ideology of "a life not worth living"

"The Nazi ideology of a life 'not worth living' and Nazi racism has its roots and ideological forbearers in both German and European history. The Nazis developed and systemised existing ideas and applied them to the extreme. They didn't really need to 'invent anything new'."

This is demonstrated using excerpts from Plato, Luther and Nietzsche, amongst others.

• Discrimination in the Weimar Republic

During this time, hundreds of thousands of disabled people were housed in degrading conditions, mostly in state institutions. This section looks at this in greater detail.

Post-War West Germany: "... as if nothing had ever happened!"

The third section examines the following five issues:

• How the vast majority of Nazi murderers were acquitted by West German courts since 1945

"While it is true that the sentences passed on Nazi murderers in the 'Nuremberg medical trial' of October 1946 and in similar trials in the Soviet Occupation Zone, even in West Germany in 1947 were largely fair, not one single Nazi murderer was brought to trial and convicted of murder in West Germany since the establishment of the FRG in 1949."

The text gives some special examples.

• **Hardly any compensation from the West German/German state**

"After 1945, the Nazi Sterilisation Law was not repealed ... Federal German courts upheld the 'legitimacy' of the 'hereditary health courts' to enforce these laws, free of Nazi aims ...

Written in Nazi jargon, compensation claims were rejected on the basis that it would cost over a billion DM, and that 'up to 60 per cent of this compensation would have to be paid out to the mentally ill, retarded and to heavy alcoholics'."

• **How the Nazis started German "human genetics" and "demography"**

"Nazi racists, Nazi 'anthropologists' and Nazi 'population scientists', who took part in the mass murders of the Nazi euthanasia programme set up the 'German Association of Demography' and the 'German Association of Anthropology'."

The section goes on to give an account of the careers of Nazi racists in West Germany. It also describes Nazi files were used after 1945 to discriminate against disabled people, and examines the climate that has remained intact since 1945.

• **The propaganda of "a life not worth living", discrimination and murder on a day to day basis**

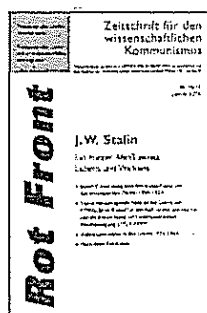
"In the 70's, German 'human geneticists' began to halt reproduction by genetically diseased' and 'asocial' people. National 'human genetic advice centres' were set up for this purpose."

The section goes on to provide a more detailed description of developments.

Actions against disabled people occurred again and again in West Germany. Examples of these are given later on in the leaflet.

• **"The German conditions" today for the disabled, sick and the elderly**

Some examples:



New:

**ROT FRONT No. 16-17
(January 2004)**

J.W. Stalin, Brief compendium of his life and work

410 pages, 15 Euro,
available (in German)
through Bookstore Georgi
Dimitroff, Speyerer Str. 23,
60327 Frankfurt/M.
(Germany)

"According to statistics provided by care initiatives, over 400,000 people were living in old people's homes in 2001. Of these 85 per cent were undernourished, 36 per cent were suffering from dehydration and 25 per cent had open sores due to a lack of care. Around 10,000 people died each year due to such conditions.

1.6 million sick and disabled people must live of social welfare.

The leaflet goes on to conclude as follows:

"The racist and German-nationalist discrimination of severely disabled people and the murderous ideology of 'a life not worth living' boast a long and deeply rooted tradition in Germany, a tradition which culminated during Nazi fascism in the mass murder of people not thought to be 'erbggesund' (i. e. those free of any hereditary defect), and thus 'unworthy of life'. Above all this meant the severely disabled and seriously ill.

The 'German situation' today for the severely disabled and seriously ill is marked by day to day discrimination, state discrimination and Nazi terror, from partially subhuman living and care conditions to the murder of seriously ill and disabled infants in hospitals.

Communist forces in Germany must today use all their powers to fight for the maximum compensation for the victims of the Nazis, to oppose Nazi terror, to oppose all forms of the murderous ideology of "a life not worth living" and the murderous practices which are a product of it!"

The leaflet appears in both an abridged and full version. The full version also features the following additional articles: On the Nazi ideology of "a life not worth living" • The mass murder of disabled Jews • The sick and disabled condemned to death fight back: "You will pay for this with your own blood!" • The mass murder of the sick and disabled in Poland and the USSR • On the problematic nature of the scope and effectiveness of protests against Nazi mass murder • On the problematic nature of discovering the real number of victims of Nazi "euthanasia" • The Nuremberg medical trial of 1946 and trials against Nazi murderers until 1947 • Nazi organisations and their roles as rabble-rousers of the Nazi ideology of "a life not worth living" and Nazi terror • On the health system of the Soviet Union during the Stalin era.



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(*Don't underrate the secret services of all countries!)