



# Bulletin

# 1/09

**Information for revolutionary and Marxist-Leninist forces of all countries**

Excerpts and synopsis from the publications by "Gegen die Strömung" - Organ for the Building of the Revolutionary Communist Party of Germany: **January - March 2009**



Appears quarterly in ENGLISH, French, Italian, Spanish, Russian and Turkish



*January's leaflet has as its main theme:*

*The reason why campaigns like the one carried out by Antifas in Hannover are very important:*

## **Fight any habituation to German militarism!**

„The German Army, like every imperialist army, requires a certain degree of acceptance and support on the part of its own domestic population. Through the employment of a vast apparatus of propaganda, supported by the bourgeois media, German imperialists and militarists have managed to prepare and carry out their gradual military expansion dynamically and effectively. They have managed to habituate the German population to increasingly open and large military interventions, under several different flags. They have done all this without encountering any significant resistance. At the same time, they have successfully managed to paint themselves as a fundamentally 'dovish' and 'human' force by pointing the finger at others – particularly at US imperialism – thus diverting attention from their own war campaigns and war crimes.

Therefore, a direct declaration of war against the German Army itself, against its war missions as well as against the forced militarisation it embodies, is of great importance, especially when it is accompanied by direct action such as that in August 2008 against the military festival 'Sommerbiwak', organised by the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Panzer Division in Hannover. The importance of this movement is grossly underestimated in the progressive and democratic movement. Those involved on this day of action were able to universally denounce not only the increasing militarisation in society and in public life in its entirety, but also the Army's intensely planned and rehearsed missions as a force of civil war, directed against the 'enemy within', and – last but not least – the increasing number of Army war deployments in other countries, thinly disguised as 'humanitarian' actions...“

**„Humanitarian assistance“ and open war propaganda**

„Above all since its incorporation of the German Democratic Republic in 1990, German imperialism has managed bit by bit to prepare, implement and expand its wars and occupations. Step by step, they managed to justify their war missions, primarily with the propaganda of so-called humanitarian assistance, as well as the so-called responsibility resting on the country because of its history of Nazi fascism. An example of the use of this propaganda is the war against Yugoslavia in 1999. Even if the humanitarian argument is still being used, other arguments are today playing an ever-more important role in this propaganda.

The story goes that the Army's role in these occupied countries is a mere provision of technical relief, a mere task of rebuilding infrastructure such as water processing facilities, canalisation, and so on. German imperialism is equally trying to act as the ambassador of western-occidental culture through, for example, the construction of school buildings and training of teachers. ... As part of its deployment in the Congo, for instance, the Army emerged to assist the construction of a 'civilised democracy' as observers during the elections that were being held. ... As well as all of this, a major role is played by the forming of policing and administrative structures in the countries under occupation by the German Army.

Only very rarely, if at all, does one find open war propaganda – under whatever pretext – and massive war operations designed directly at the annihilation of the enemy up for discussion on any open agenda. This is the case even despite the constant military forays, such as during the war mission in Afghanistan. ... It is a fact that the troops of the Special Forces Command (KSK), made up of several hundred special units, have been conducting a war in Afghanistan for years, aimed at the complete destruction of the enemy. ...All of these propagandist tricks and

functions of the German Army ... lead directly to the downplaying of German militarism.

### **Trivialisation and pro-imperialist propaganda**

„But what is important is not just the direct Army propaganda created by German imperialism. The political whitewashing by bourgeois parties like the SPD, the Greens and the LINKE/PDS also carries great weight. Joining in with the whitewash are all the sell-out lords of the trades union, dragged along in tow of the parties: with all their excuses for imperialist war politics, they have softened up many an anti-war campaigner over the years, creating sympathy for German imperialism in the process. ...“

### **Wrong positioning**

„Also, though, the wrong positioning of pseudo-Marxists and other opportunists weaken the anti-war movement from within. ... As a result, the German Army is still considered by many people to be ‘the lesser of two evils’ when compared to US imperialism, or is simply designated as being ‘in the tow of US imperialism’. Even the more radical position inside the antiwar movement limits itself to the view that the German Army is a mere part – even if it is a leading part – of a so-called ‘EU imperialism’. ...

All the talk of this ‘EU imperialism’ completely overlooks the fact that internal competition exists in the EU between the imperialist states of Germany, France, the UK and Italy, and that *German* imperialism is a war focus and warmonger in it’s own right – in essence, that German imperialism is its own, independent imperialism. Talk of an EU imperialism overlooks the fact that it is precisely German imperialism, with its own domestic Army, that is the main enemy in Germany.“

### **Militarisation of society**

„A prerequisite for waging wars is quiet on the home front. The process of ensuring that the home front becomes attuned to these wars occurs through the news coverage of the bourgeois media, through public military parades and public discussions of national war memorials and war medals for those who are supposed to have ‘fallen for the fatherland’. ...

Another factor which cannot be underestimated is the indoctrination of the soldiers themselves, who commit themselves to several further years of war service after their initial compulsory conscription. With this commitment, they obligate themselves to ‘missions’ in other countries. When they then ‘return’ to Germany afterwards, they know ‘from personal experience’ of the war missions – be they in

Kosovo, Macedonia, Afghanistan or the Congo – how to properly conduct oneself as a colonialist occupier, and therefore serve themselves to exacerbate militarism in society. ...

At the same time as the external war missions in other countries, there is an acceleration of the Army’s deployment domestically in Germany. ... The best example of this is the enormous military deployment to Rostock in June 2007: to put down the protests against the G8 summit being held in the city, the armed forces deployed 2,000 soldiers to Rostock, accompanied by Tornado aircraft to carry out surveillance, German navy vessels, and armoured reconnaissance tanks.“

### **The Struggle against German militarism**

„... Although it is absolutely necessary to create a counterpropaganda against militarism, and to publicly reveal the Army’s machinations and crimes for what they are, we must still ensure that the following is never forgotten:

Simply trying to unmask the Army with publicly available facts cannot bring about any mobilisation: these ‘facts’ simply are not there for us to use, because the Army operates publicly with precisely such facts and numbers. ... Ultimately, the only way to truly uncover German militarism is through direct action directed against the military. ... Even during the mass demonstrations against the security conferences of NATO, the protest can and must be directed against German imperialism and its wars, in order to really drive the message home: the main enemy is here, in its own country. ...

The task for the Communist forces within the anti-militarist movement is clear: we must explain and prove that the fight against the Army must be seen as a vital part of the fight against German imperialism and the state it controls. For this was a matter on which Marx was utterly clear: the capitalist state, including its army, must be entirely destroyed!“

*The leaflet covers two A3 sides and contains the following additional supplement:*

- *German Imperialism, Militarism and Revanchism (Theses for Discussion)*

#### **Advertisement:**

**Buchladen Georgi Dimitroff**

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Open: Thursday 5.30 pm - 7 pm

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## German imperialism in Greece

„The impressive struggles of the militant youths and numerous workers in Greece, particularly in the wake of the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2008, when the 15-year-old Alexis Grigoropoulos was murdered by a police officer in Athens, have attracted great attention in revolutionary circles in many countries around the world, and particularly in Germany. ...

Our solidarity with our campaigning comrade brothers and sisters in Greece should bring our attention to one particularly important issue: educating the public about our 'own' imperialism – that is, German imperialism – and its role in both the history of Germany and in its present-day circumstances.“

*The article starts by establishing that:*

„Today, Greece is a capitalist country that has on the one hand its own expansionist interests, which are particularly prosecuted against its neighbour countries (Macedonia, Cyprus); but is on the other hand also fundamentally dependent on the great imperialist powers of the world. US imperialism has ensured that, to this day, US military bases in Greece are retained and that troops remain stationed there. This provides US imperialism a foothold with which to compete against the great imperialist powers of Europe, particularly that emanating from Germany, for influence in Greece.

...Because of this global competition between the imperialism of the German state and that of the other great imperialist powers, particularly America, German imperialism is busily making up on lost time in Greece.“

*The leaflet emphasises that:*

„German imperialism disguises itself so that it can camouflage its unbroken tradition of Nazi fascism. It falls to us to thwart them in this manoeuvring of theirs. ... By means of the politics of coalition and deception in the state it controls, imperialism in this country has successfully been able to force a very large proportion of those in Germany who understand themselves as members of the revolutionary left into a situation where they uncritically accept such phrases as 'globalisation' or 'EU imperialism'. In this way, such revolutionaries actually help to sanitise the history and tradition of German imperialism, instead of exposing it and fighting against it. It is our intention to take up the fight against this ten-

dency with our next published report, highlighting the need for internationalist proletarian solidarity to actively involve, and not to simply ignore, the fight against 'domestic' German imperialism.“

### **Highlights: the impact of German imperialism in Greece**

#### **Economic impact**

„... Ever since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Germany has been the most important sales market for Greek products. ...

The powers that be in the world of German financial capital were not spared their militarily defeat in 1945. But from as early as the 1960s onwards in Greece, the German financial rulers managed to become a leading voice – indeed, in some arenas, *the* leading voice – in matters of Greek economics. ...“

*The following examples are discussed: For years, Germany has been Greece's most important trading partner, both in terms of manufactured imports and manufactured exports. Large-scale projects such as the Athens Metro were and are carried out with the substantial participation of German capitalists. Capital export: alongside the USA, Germany is one of the most important 'investors' in Greece. The leaflet continues:*

„... The significance of German imperialism in Greece can be clarified particularly in connection with the important struggles that have recently been conducted against German monopolists and capitalists.“

*There follows a short summary of relevant examples: Strike against RWE in March 2006 against the takeover of the Greek semigovernmental energy company Public Power Cooperation (DIE) by the German energy corporation RWE. Strike against Siemens in August 2008 against factory closure and mass redundancies in the city of Thessaloniki. Strike against Deutsche Telekom in March 2008 against their planned market entry into Greece through the largest Greek network provider, Hellenic Telecom (OTE).*

#### **Political impact**

„... The German imperialists carry out their pincer attack by also focusing on expanding their political influence. This is evident not only in their support

between 1967 and 1974 of the murderous military dictatorship in Greece, when German imperialists supplied the junta extensively with weapons and other materials. It is also clear in how they used the situation that many Greek politicians found themselves in in Germany – i.e., exile – to paint themselves as friends of a democratic Greece: the personal connections that were then established could be used to strengthen German interests in Greece after a changeover of power. ...“

### **Military impact**

„At the end of the 1940s, US imperialism superseded the hitherto hegemonic English imperialism.

...

However, the military impact of German imperialism cannot be underestimated. That is clear just from looking at its manoeuvring in recent decades. Since the 1960s, German imperialism has been participating in NATO manoeuvres using its own Army units stationed in Greece. Since the 1970s, units of the German Army in Greece have been carrying out their own operations. Since 1971, the German Army has at its disposal missile launch bases on the island of Crete, as well as landing rights at Greek air bases. Greek officers are present in military academies to participate in the training of the general staff of the German Army, and Greek soldiers of all ranks are trained in the schools of the German Army. All of this is quite evidently the product of a historic tradition. General Metaxas, who was the head of the military dictatorship from 1936, was not only an admirer of the German Nazi fascists, but was also a graduate of the Prussian War Academy.

Above and beyond its position in NATO and in the EU, German imperialism has been busily strengthening its military influence in Greece for years – in fact, for decades. It has been doing this in no small measure by extensively equipping the Greek Army with German-made munitions...“

*In conclusion, the leaflet emphasises that*

„The fact is that as a major aggressive power, German imperialism exercises enormous influence in the fields of economics, politics and the military in Greece, which it is increasingly reconstructing to shore up its own position in rivalry with other major imperialist powers. The fact is also that major struggles against exploitation and oppression in Greece are directed directly against the forces of German financial capital such as Siemens, Deutsche Telekom and RWE – and that the quite specific responsibility falls to us in Germany to actively and

directly support these struggles.

In all of this, it still remains absolutely vital to unmask the unbroken tradition of German imperialism in Greece, which began during the years of Nazi aggression against and occupation of Greece. This responsibility is all the more pressing in light of the German state’s persistent and ongoing refusal to provide any sort of compensation to Greek victims of Nazi massacres and of the Nazi genocide in Greece. Without stepping up as an advocate for these just demands, there is no way for honest solidarity here in Germany, not even on a democratic level. A voluntary, conscious and revolutionary coalition of our forces is impossible if there is no mutual trust. But we must ask ourselves: how can the working men and women of Greece ever develop this trust if they never see or sense the fact that, here in Germany, the working class is already engaged in confronting the German imperialists that control this country, along with all their machinations and the crimes they commit?

The fundamental issue is this: if we do not prioritise the fight against our ‘own’ imperialism’s machinations here in Germany, against the German imperialism which controls this country, then no internationalist proletarian coalition can exist. Without fighting our ‘own’ imperialism here, we can never ally ourselves with those working men and women being exploited and oppressed by German imperialism, nor with the revolutionary forces already struggling against it in Greece. This is proved by the Communist principle enshrined in Marx and Engels’ *Manifesto of the Communist Party*: ‘Workers of the world, unite!’“

### **Death to German imperialism, militarism and revanchism!**

*The leaflet covers four A3-sides and contains the following additional supplement:*

- *The campaign in the wake of the murder of Alexis Grigoropoulos by Greek police in December 2008*
- *The 17<sup>th</sup> November 1973*
- *Greece: 1941-1949*



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(\*... but don't underestimate the secret services anywhere in the world)