

Borderless Solidarity

- statement by „die plattform – Anarchakommunistische Organisation“

Originally published in German on dieplattform.org in November 2020 under the title „Grenzenlose Solidarität“. This short statement represents the general position of the organization towards nationalism, imperialism and internationalism and argues for building a global revolutionary movement from below that expands beyond national borders and unites class struggles worldwide.

Translated in February 2021 by Peter Brandt, member of die plattform.

Anarchism or anarchist communism is a worldwide movement based on borderless solidarity¹. This principle has been applied since the movement's emergence in the middle of the 19th century. The founding of the "International Workers' Association" ("First International") in 1864 and the "Anti-authoritarian International" in 1872 were important historical attempts to organize the socialist and anarchist workers' movement across national borders. In the course of history, many more have been added up to the present day.

Since capitalist exploitation, racist and patriarchal oppression as well as other forms of domination are structurally anchored worldwide, borderless solidarity of the exploited and oppressed has proven itself as a powerful response.

Capitalism exists worldwide, and so does the wage-earning class. The ruling class (consisting of those who govern and those who own the means of production and land) is united in fundamental questions (of securing possession and power) and conducts global class struggle from above². It is therefore necessary to engage in and coordinate social struggles across national and continental borders. The class of wage earners must unite under the worldwide interests of wage earning and exploited people to overcome their exploitation³. Labor strikes, for example, must be organized across national borders to be successful, due to global chains of production and relocation.

We live in imperialist⁴ states which, together with the globally operating corporations of other

1 We deliberately do not use the term "internationalism" here. Our criticism here is not directed against the importance of exercising practical solidarity between people in different regions of the world. Rather, we criticise the fact that the term "internationalism" carries the meaning "between nations" and thus conveys an understanding that does not fundamentally question the nation-state and nationalities, but maintains them. This generally perpetuates the social construct of the „nation“ and in particular the division of the wage-dependent class into nations, with no progressive concept of solidarity emerging. However, as long as we have to live in nation-states, we must acknowledge the existence of nations as socially constructed realities and therefore act both internationalist and anti-nationalist in practice in equal measure.

2 As the capitalist system puts wage-earners in competition with each other and the ruling class promotes the exploitation and oppression of the wage-earning class in an organized manner, while also building lines of division based on gender or (attributed) origin.

3 Although different interests are constituted by state and capital, and living and working conditions in different regions of the world differ to some extent.

4 Imperialism means the "aspiration of a major power to extend its sphere of rule or, at least, to gain control over other areas. This can be on a political and cultural level, but above all in economic terms. However, in order to gain control of a country, it does not necessarily have to be (militarily) occupied. Often this is done by economic dependence and by the placement of own companies" (from: Denegro: Anarchistisches Wörterbuch. Münster. 2014. p. 62)

states, exploit their resources and wage-dependent inhabitants economically and suppress them militarily. This is done, among other things, by means of debt dependency, economically „competing others to the ground“ and destructive trade policies as well as war and other military interventions. When cooperating with groups from other regions, our privileged position as people living in Germany must be taken into account. This includes on the one hand living in the so-called northern hemisphere, the wealth of which is based on colonialism and exploitation both historically and currently. And on the other hand Germany plays a dominant and profitable role in the European Union.

Certainly the wage-earning class possesses only a small part of the wealth acquired as described, as it is largely appropriated by a few. However, we must be aware that parts of the working class identify their individual interests with national interests.

The interest in the class struggle of the wage dependent class in Germany is inevitably linked to the fate of the international class of wage-dependent people. For this reason, the socialisation of the means of production on the part of wage earners in Germany is always linked to a struggle against Germany as a business location itself. Precisely because Germany also pursues imperialist aspirations throughout the world, this also means acting against the interests of the business location itself and disturbing or preventing it from securing or safeguarding its interests.

At the same time, however, many wage earners in Germany work in export-oriented industries and companies. This means that they are dependent on exports in the short term and indirectly. The resulting concerns and fears of participating in industrial action must be taken seriously and taken into account. However, we must not conform, we must always keep the liberation of all people as a perspective. To this end it is necessary to establish and maintain international contacts.

Our response to these conditions is twofold: firstly, the struggle at home against capitalist logic and the domination of state and capital. Secondly, a global struggle, in which we fight together with and show solidarity with progressive movements of class struggle from other regions of the world.

The state is not an ally in this struggle, as its livelihood and international assertiveness is linked to successful capital accumulation. It can indeed take political measures that run counter to the interests of capital or individual capital fractions. However, such measures may not endanger accumulation as a whole, as otherwise the state would deprive itself of its own livelihood in the long term. The fight must therefore go beyond national borders. Global solidarity between the wage-dependent class can only be successful if the states as co-producers of national rivalries are dissolved. As revolutionary and anti-national anarcha-communists we do not show solidarity with so-called "anti-imperialist" states, their local ruling elites or political parties of "national liberation". Instead, we show solidarity with the class-struggle progressive movements of the wage-earning class⁵.

The effort to build a worldwide revolutionary movement whose solidarity goes beyond national borders are constantly under attack by the state and capital: patriarchal and racist forms of oppression and domination and the categorization and discrimination of people according to sexist, racist, antisemitic and other patterns are used to suppress emancipatory struggles early on. This happens through reproduction of the social conditions in which these forms of domination and oppression represent essential selection criteria and by the conscious use of these by reactionary

⁵ Critique of national liberation movements: National liberation movements often have limited aims: The conquest of political (state) power and the administration of the people by a new (more regional) government. National liberation movements often include all socially powerful/influential actors in their struggle - including the ruling class. Thus class differences within these movements are hidden. In addition, the focus on national interests transports nationalism and racism and strengthens their advocates. National liberation movements set up in this way do not bring freedom for the wage-earning class. Instead, (borderless) class struggle is marginalised by prioritization of national liberation and the strengthening of nationalism. If national liberation movements are very popular within the wage-earning class, it must be the task of the anarchists to marginalise nationalist and racist positions within these movements and to anchor a class struggle, anarchist program on a broad basis

forces to discriminate and oppress people. The unity of the wage-dependent class worldwide therefore also means fighting against institutionalized discrimination and oppression on the basis of gender, (ascribed) origin and nationality.

"All nationalism is reactionary in nature because it seeks to impose a certain character on the individual parts of the large human family according to a preconceived belief." (Rudolf Rocker, Nationalism and Culture, p. 207)

The social revolution in just one country cannot be successful in the long term⁶, nor is a revolution limited to one state desirable. A united worldwide revolutionary movement of the wage-earning class is our proposal to overcome capitalism and domination.

Worldwide solidarity is the sharpest weapon of the wage-dependent class - we want to build worldwide relations with other class-struggle-centered movements and organisations of the wage-dependent class and achieve borderless solidarity to reach this goal.

⁶ A look at history shows that social revolutions that were limited to individual regions or nation states (e.g. the commune of Shinmin in Manchuria in 1929/1930 or parts of Spain in 1936/1937) could not be sustained in the long term. The reason for this was massive military repression by the military at home and abroad. In addition, there were economic dependencies in certain areas (raw materials, products, means of production), which had a negative impact on the course of the social revolutionary phase.