

Street Parties and Sausages

News from Germany

Hüttendorf-frolics

The anti-A33 Hüttendorf is a protest camp and autonomous space against the construction of a motorway near Bielefeld in North Germany. The A33 has been planned since 1937 and building started 25 years ago. 30 kilometres are yet to be built, which will in parts lead through highly sensitive ancient woodland.

The first camp was set up about 6 years ago near Dissen, on a bit of the route already in use today. In the beginning, there were only 2-3 people who were ignored by the police and who had never thought this would turn into a long-term project. The more surprised everyone was when more and more people came, and when the camp was finally evicted, there were enough motivated people to move on a few kilometres and set up a new camp.

Since then, about 5 camps were set up successively, which were the base for actions such as site invasions and road blockades. The motivation amongst people involved is quite diverse, but these might be the main aspects: First of all, the 'Hüttendorf' is a protest camp against the A33 and building of motorways in general, with the transformation of the Earth into a concrete desert. Included in this is resistance to the whole capitalist system and inhuman society, which motorways are only an element of. Beyond that, living in the Hüttendorf means, or at least it should mean, to be able to live a life with more freedom and quality than possible in the 'outside world' of anonymity, conformity and pressure.

In its best times, about 15-20 people were living in the camp but there have been quite bad times as well. Two years ago, there were two camps at the same time after one was unsuccessfully evicted. These quickly turned into camps of quite different character. In February 1997, one of the camps was finally evicted so people moved together which led to conflicts, with endless discussions about veganism, sexism and political correctness. We still managed to put on an RTS in Dissen in August 1997 (see separate article).

We were expecting an eviction any day in the early spring of 1998, so we started building barricades, putting up new walkways and so on. In July/August we tried to find a new site for the next camp, but there weren't many state-owned plots left. We finally found nearly a whole forest owned by an Earl/Lord (or whatever). Obviously we weren't too successful when we tried to ask him for a bit of land to set up

camp, so we started squatting on his territory. Generally, the actions of this summer were rather symbolic. Not having many 'climbers' at the time, we mainly set up tents and started building huts, building a tower only once. We were evicted about every two days and taken to the police station regularly. So we didn't get very far, just got on their nerves a bit and showed we wouldn't give up.

Although we had been expecting an eviction of the main camp for a long time, it finally came as a surprise in October 1998. There were only four people in the trees and some others in their huts and wagons who were quickly surrounded by cops. Still, the eviction could be stopped for a few hours as they had problems getting people out of the trees. Although the cops has a special climbing unit, they had to call a cherry picker. Cutting started right away and falling trees nearly hit treesitters. They even started felling a tree two people were sitting on. Fortunately, no one got hurt. There weren't any arrests but we might be held liable for the whole cost of the eviction, about DM 150,000.

Everyone was burnt out and motivation rather low after the eviction. Cops harassed and followed the 'Huettendoerflern' everywhere. We were also harassed by the landlord of a nearby flat everyone had moved to (15 of us plus several dogs instead of the usual 6 inhabitants). There were hardly any actions at that time.





We still didn't want to give up and planned another action for November. A lot of new, motivated people came to take the land and unlike previous actions in summer everything was quite well planned and organised. It took 2-3 hours until we were evicted just because of one person sitting on top of a hut we built, for which they ordered the fire brigade especially.

This gave us a kick and we made plans for another action at Christmas. So while the rest of Borgholzhausen was sitting around their Christmas trees, 10 activists went into the woods and set up a new 'Hüttendorf' on the Earl's land. Cops cleared this quickly, but we ran and hid in a nearby derelict house the police didn't care to remove us as they thought the house was too dodgy to enter. So after they left, we climbed out and started building a camp again. This method worked until the cops cleared

and destroyed the house with a special unit, but we continued squatting, until everyone, including the cops and the landowner, was worn out. They had been confiscating all our sleeping bags and tools every morning, it couldn't go on like this forever.

Therefore, we finally arranged a meeting with the police and the landowner from which we didn't expect much. And nobody understands the outcome — we were granted a new site on which we'll be legally allowed to set up camp. By now, there are already a few wagons and people are busy building huts. If you want to drop by you're more than welcome, just give us a call.

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Reclaim the Streets in Germoney

This is intended to be a short overview of the RTS-movement in Germany. The first big RTS under this name (although we obviously have always had street parties as part of the squatting movement) took place on August 30th 1997 in Dissen, a small town in the North. They're building a motorway there (see above). About 200-300 people came for it and the crowd moved through the streets around a soundsystem. The cops didn't know how to react at first because even they didn't feel they could use their usual force against such a happy, dancing mob. So they just accompanied us and there are rumours that some were even seen dancing! At some point the main road was taken, at the time the only connection between Osnabrück and Bielefeld, two major cities. It was blockaded with a tractor, tripods and lock-ons and the cops were told the party would stay there for 2-3 hours. After hesitating a bit, the police decided clearing the crowd would probably take longer than that so they'd just stand by and be bored. After about 2 hours of wild dancing everything was packed up and people moved on to one of the many motorway construction sites nearby to have a party lasting long into the night and attracting most of the local kids.

This successful action inspired two people in Berlin to start preparing an RTS there. Unfortunately it took a while to get more people involved. But the first RTS in Berlin took place in November 1997, which admittedly had asked the police for permission and was disrupted by a lot of stop and search by the stupid cops. The advertising hadn't been perfect

either so only about 100-150 people got together, but those that came were enthusiastic about this type of action, far from the commercialism of the Love Parade. Then the soundsystem gave up (always remember to bring enough fuel for the generator!) which kind of killed the party, so people went on to demonstrate about the eviction of a squatted Spanish village.

This wasn't exactly what I had imagined an RTS to be like (no occupation, no blockades, stupid cops lined up around it... bah), but at least the atmosphere and the response were good. And people got to know each other which led to the formation of a proper collective which got the ball rolling for the next Berlin RTS. At first, there were just four of us; but we distributed flyers and soon the group grew to include about 10 people. The next Berlin RTS was to be on May 16th 1998 (the Global Day of Action), to protest together with all those others across the world against the World Trade Organisation meeting in Geneva and the G7/8 summit in Birmingham. Our motto was 'Fun can be Resistance!' But before things got serious there was an RTS in Bielefeld in April 1998. About 200 people demonstrated against the privatisation of public roads, the construction of the A33 as well as the fact that people constantly get moved on out of town centres. After initial difficulties (the cops were very stubborn) a junction was taken and blockaded with two tripods and two lock-ons, and a truck suddenly revealed a soundsystem. People started dancing right away and a lot of

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passers-by joined in as the party was next to a busy car boot sale. The cops didn't know what to do except to surround and stop the party for about 8 hours, arresting 170 people, locking them up over night and subjecting them to physical and verbal abuse.

With this experience, our day in Berlin approached and believe me, we were nervous because we really couldn't tell how many people would come or how the infamous Berlin thug-police would react (and there had been quite a bit of rioting on the 1st of May that had really pissed them off).

A lot of people turned up at the meeting point was at the Alexanderplatz, a so-called dangerous place with a constant police presence and security guards that hassle anyone who doesn't fit into their image of a consumer paradise. After a while the mob moved out to where the blockading group was waiting for the go-ahead and the Critical Mass cyclists arrived. So simultaneously an old car and some construction site fences blocked the road and two 10m high tripods were set up. Because I was stuck on one of those I could only watch from up high which was really boring... oh well, for the revolution... The soundsystem kicked in and the junction was filled with about 800 people. The weather was good (sun, sun, sun) and the busy road framed by the ugliest high-rises you could imagine was trans-



formed for a few hours into a colourful oasis and freed from smelly traffic. The cops again couldn't figure out how to react; it had all happened so quickly. They first called in special anti-terrorist units (SEK) and barricade breakers, but in the end stayed back. At 6pm the soundsystem, protected by a spontaneous flow of dancing people, moved out of the street and into a legalized squat and the party dissolved. The same night we squatted an empty factory and celebrated way into the night.

Of course the next RTS had to follow soon and it took place on the day of the general election, September 27th 1998. We were going to party in front of the SPD (Social Democrats) party headquarters, who were expected to win the election. The meeting point was further away this time and we used the underground to get to the party location.

The cops wanted to act a bit more tough this time to 'protect' Berlin, but this move meant they completely lost us. When we arrived at the party headquarters after riding the train for about 10 minutes not a uniform was in sight which is always a nice thing. We had arrived with about 600 people and there was a soundsystem and tripod. A lot of things were painted, banners and hammocks etc. put up, but only because the organising group had nicked all these decorations in the preceding weeks. No punters brought anything themselves. It's a shame that so many people seem to have a consumer attitude towards such events. I hope a few feel guilty now!

The planned SPD-celebration 'Yay, it's our turn to fuck people over now!' was supposed to start at 6pm, so the cops started hassling people at half past five, moving into the crowd, arresting people and trying unsuccessfully to take the soundsystem. But after constant attacks, the truck with the soundsystem disappeared off. The party-mob moved on towards Kreuzberg and then drifted apart (unfortunately) before a proper riot could kick off, which I thought was a shame. Oh well.

There was another action in front of the Friedrichshain's (a Berlin district) town hall in October 1998 because the traffic commission was meeting to plan a six lane extension to the bypass. It was all on short notice so only about 70 people turned up. We had ghettobusters and drums and a large main road was occupied. Half an hour later the cops showed up, so the party moved into the town hall to pay a visit to the traffic commission. The half-witted cops had parked their vans in the middle of the road so the traffic was stopped for a further 45 minutes anyway. We had great fun in the town hall where we sat on the tables in the meeting hall and hung banners over the city map and out of the window. We met with much solidarity from passers-by and even from some commission members. The motorway won't be built for a while yet, but the resistance to it is already growing (the next M11?).

More RTS's had been planned. There's a lot to do, so come round sometime. Send loveletters to:
RTS, c/o M99, Manteuffelstr. 99, 10997 Berlin, Germany. Website: <http://rts.squat.net>



Antifascists in Action



Leipzig, May '98

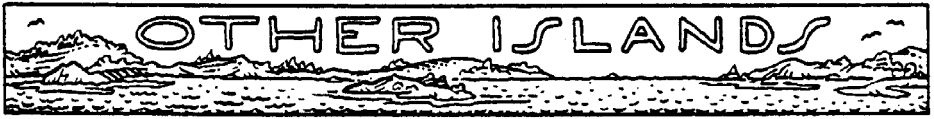
On the May 1st 1998, the Junge National-demokrat-en (JN), the fascist youth organisation of the NPD (nazi-party) and the NPD itself called a rally in Leipzig under the slogan 'Day of National Resistance'. They had previously planned a demonstration which was banned by the German judiciary. Nonetheless, a rally could still be held for which they were predicting 10-15,000 boneheads participating. May 1st is a traditional workers' day on which they have taken their demands for higher wages, better working conditions and social services out onto the streets, but also celebrates the revolutionary struggle of the working class worldwide. It's an opportunity for all disenfranchised, marginalised, exploited people who've had enough of the capitalist torture to demonstrate (usually) militantly against the inhumane living and working conditions forced upon us. The antifascists and other like-minded radical people felt trapped. What were we supposed to do: give the nazi scum a kicking and thus be unable to take our own agenda (a society free of control, power, discrimination and hierarchy) out onto the streets, or ignore the fascists and concentrate on the various revolutionary demonstrations to show the ruling elite were fed up with their shit? Why not have both, we thought!

The Antifa called a counter-demonstration and 5000-6000 fighters showed up. The nazis assembled about 5000 shitheads at their rally at the War

Memorial, which is in light of their predictions quite pathetic, but still a huge and threatening mobilisation, signaling that times have changed and it's not as easy as it was in the '80s to kick them off the streets.

To sum it up—even though it's quite alarming that the nazis are now able to organise and mobilise such large numbers, forcing us to adopt new strategies, I do consider the day a success. The fascists realised it was dangerous to march. Lots of their busses were trashed, lots of boneheads were sent to hospital and the cops had to pay the costs of protecting the fascists. We had shown an energetic and determined act of resistance and made clear that we are not going to tolerate their dehumanising propaganda. After the riots in Leipzig, the antifascists got into their cars and busses and the war was taken to Berlin where it turned into mass rioting in support of the revolutionary demonstrations there.

On September 19th 1998, the JN and NPD once again called a rally, this time as part of their election campaign. The planned location for their rally proved to be the height of cynicism. They wanted to hold it in front of the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' in Rostock, formerly inhabited by refugees and immigrants, which was the target of a racist and fascist mob in August 1992 (see box). Apparently the JN and NPD see themselves in the same tradition as the racist mob. After the usual court proceedings, a rally at the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' was prohibited and the



nazis had to pursue a different route through Rostock. So, 3,000 fuckfaces turned up, while the 'Coalition against the Right' assembled up to 10,000 people in front of the 'Sonnenblumenhaus' where a rather liberal, bourgeois and 'multicultural' event took place as a sign of peace, communication and tolerance.

Meanwhile 2000 autonomous antifascists demonstrated in the city and were subjected to brutal attacks by the police, as well as constant provocations and arbitrary arrests. 117 antifascists were taken into custody on that day. Due to the huge amount of cops (6000) it was almost impossible to get near the route of the nazi demonstration in order to disrupt it. This time the cops established a spatial separation between the nazis and the antifa, so the skins didn't face severe and effective resistance.

Finally, the day was overshadowed by a tragic incident during the demonstration: 60 nazis attacked, unnoticed, the antifascist information tent and injured 2 people. On their retreat, a nazi ran over a 28 year old antifascist with his car. The antifascist, Holger, fell immediately into a coma (fortunately, he woke up 8 days later) but now has to cope with severe brain damage. It's clear that despite the fact that more than 10000 people demonstrated against fascism and there was a rather successful co-operation with the 'Coalition against the Right', it was an ineffective action which could have ended fatally for one of the antifas. Rostock was not a success.

From the 24th of July until the August 1st, an antiracist camp took place in Rothenburg in Eastern Germany, on the Polish border. The whole thing was initiated by 'Kein Mensch ist Illegal' (No human is illegal), a campaign fighting for the rights of refugees and immigrants. It started off with a weekend of techno. The vibes were provided by Radical Rave, a left-wing Berlin-based techno collective. The action orientated camp aimed to resist and protest against the hunt for humans along the German/Polish border by the German border patrol. Furthermore, the activists demonstrated against the willingness of the German population to grass up refugees or immigrants who have fled to Germany (more than 70% of arrested immigrants are caught this way). About 400 people from Italy, Poland, Switzerland and Germany participated in the camp. Most of them are organised in antiracist/antifascist groups.

Their actions were aimed at causing disorder and irritation for the BGS (German border patrol), to disturb the smooth routine with which the police and the

population hunt immigrants. The camp was a show of solidarity with all those who flee hunger, war and exploitation, and those who have to leave their home countries for various reasons. Migration and refugees are a result of a 'neo-liberal' capitalist world order and arms sold to fascist regimes.

Since 1993, according to official statistics, 57 people have died while trying to cross the border illegally. The German/Polish border, one of the clearest dividing lines between 'poor' Eastern and 'affluent' Western Europe, has the highest density of cops in Europe. They are equipped with helicopters, infrared cameras, heat detectors and night vision goggles.

The Truth Lies in Rostock

78 minute video available from 'Spectacle', TV Centre, Thackeray Road, London SW8 3TV, UK

In August 1992 in Rostock, northeastern Germany, a mob of fascists attacked a tower block, home to Vietnamese guest workers. The city's population stood by, clapping, the police withdrew and only took proper action against antifascists when they turned up. The siege of the refugee centre lasted three days.

When I first heard about it back then I was a schoolkid in Germany and I was utterly horrified. This was the first news of 'neo-nazi' violence I had heard of. Being half Asian, I was scared to go out for a while and stared intently at my classmates to figure out if they would have participated. And I absolutely refused to watch it on TV, so when I recently watched this video it was quite intense.

The footage has been collected from actually inside the refugee centre, an ugly high rise in the middle of an estate, and from in front of the building as the fascists raged. There are also a range of interviews with Vietnamese guest workers, antifascists who were with them during the attack, the police and authorities as well as local nazis and sympathisers.

The police unwillingly admit they withheld forces and residents willingly admit their bigotry and endorsement of the attack. It started as a rumour of a fascist action and escalated into an angry crowd setting fire to an inhabited building. A 'foreigner free estate' was the goal and it's fucking scary.

This was not just an episode in recent history, it stands in the context of increasing fascist organisation in Europe. This video is a wake up call. Someday it could be too late to halt fascist activity, it can appear in full force out of nowhere.

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There was a demonstration on the November 21st 1998, in commemoration of the antifascist Silvio Meier who was stabbed to death by proud German scum in 1992. This time 2500 people attended and demonstrated against the 'Cafe Germania', a pub run by the well-known nazi Andreas Voigt. It is located in Berlin-Lichtenhagen and has been a meeting place for nazis to get organised and plan attacks against left-wing projects or anyone who doesn't fit into their narrow-minded fascist world view. So a coalition had been formed, political pressure mounted and the antifa did the appropriate DIY glazing. A couple of weeks later, in December, the pub closed due to the massive public pressure.

Another thing worth mentioning is the 'Koepi', an old squat in Berlin, which is a self-organised, non profit DIY social centre as well as being home to



about 40 people. It was to be sold on the 16th of February 1999. So on the 13th, over 2000 people took their solidarity out on the streets and protested against the gentrification that is happening all over Berlin. The night after the demo, an autonomous group smashed some windows at the 'Hackeschen Hoeft' (a yuppie club) that used to be a squat. At the auction, no bidder dared to raise their hand for the Koepi, so for now it remains ours.

Other actions I won't go into now were two antifascist demos in Saarbruecken (Southern Germany), a women's/lesbians' camp in Goerlitz, the biggest animal liberation action in Germany etc. I just wanted to give a small impression of what's happening over here. The autonomous movement is still in a process of restructuring and rethinking, but will hopefully soon be alive and kicking as it should be! Have a nice riot—the future belongs to us!

Fascist organisation in Germany is on the increase.

Since the 'reunification' East Germans have realised Western capitalism is fucking them over just as badly as the old 'communist' state, nazi political parties have been gaining votes and more and more young people have been turning to fascism as a rebellious youth culture.

Fascist organisations are supposed to be banned under German legislation, but obviously there are ways of getting around this—from avoiding certain key words in your manifestos to disbanding and coming together under a different name. The German State has turned a blind eye towards fascists. In fact, politicians have even been adopting the nazis' rhetoric ("This second generation of migrants are unnecessary in the economic system") and giving in to their demands when it suits them, tightening the laws on immigration every once in a while. Raids against fascists are blatantly half-hearted. For example, the same day saw a series of raids on fascists yielding 60 guns and several kilos of explosives, and raids on antifascists yielding nothing but some clay which tenuously was declared 'a potential part of an explosive'. The antifascists were prosecuted under paragraph 129 (membership of a proscribed organisation), whereas the fascists were not.

Attacks on shops run by foreigners, on asylum seekers' holding facilities and on alternative centres, squats and the like happen almost everyday and don't even make the headlines anymore. In one city alone, Chemnitz, there were at least 35 violent attacks on migrants, punks and others by fascists between January 1997-98. A number of antifascists and foreigners have been killed by fascist gangs.

A friend in Berlin said "The nazis are showing themselves more openly than ever. It's not unusual to have a bunch of them hassling you on your way home from shopping. There are some areas where anarchists, migrants and others the nazis dislike just won't dare to go to anymore (e.g. Berlin Lichtenberg, Hellersdorf, Marzahn...)"

The concept of 'liberated zones' the NPD (German National Party) have been pushing—creating a fascist popular youth culture, a 'cultural hegemony' that has an area totally under its control—has certainly succeeded in certain parts of Germany. It's 'the thing to do' for many young people, increasingly disillusioned with conventional parliamentary politics and facing unemployment and general misery. Antifascism has failed to rise to the challenge, and anarchist or left politics are not attractive anymore...