

Prague Spring 2

Network against Right-wing Extremism and Populism

Issue nr 3 2016



Building peace in Warsaw

In Central and Eastern Europe international social movements are building hope for the future. The region is at the forefront of international civil society cooperation in 2016 for peace, against austerity and uniting peasants and the environmental movement. At the Social Forum in Wroclaw in March experiences were exchanged between CEE countries, Southern Europe, North Africa, West Asia and Latin America uniting the periphery against the center. At the NATO alternative Summit in Warsaw in July the global peace movement met welcomed by Polish social movements to unite against militarization of politics. “Money for the hungry, not for the tanks” was the slogan on the streets of Warsaw. Right to housing, social security and yes to refugees was seen as the road to peace against the growing armament and cooperation between EU and NATO. At the European Food sovereignty meeting in Romania in September another important step to unite movements will be taken building an historical alliance between peasant and urban health and environmental interests against corporate rule. Read more and be inspired from a region where movements are repressed but stand up!



Russian antifascist speaking at the founding meeting of PS2

The Prague Spring 2 network against right-wing extremism and populism (PS2) was set up in Prague 2010 as an AI-European network. Many of the members have roots in social forums held in countries in Central and Eastern Europe. Right-wing extremism and populism was seen as an immediate threat but from the start PS2 put this issue in a broader ecological and social context supporting cooperation between different movements.

Read more at:

www.praguespring2.net

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Campaign of historical truth

Comment by the editor:

The fate of this proposal is in your hands. There was one weakness apart from the many good sides of the alternative summit. The lack of possibilities for participants to contribute effectively to a common process and statements. Thus this text could not be decided at the meeting and it was left to self-organizing of signitures.

Tord Björk, ed.

Sign-on:

DECLARATION OF WARSAW

For all of us, participants from 18 countries in the counter summit against NATO in Warsaw, it became clear throughout these last days that NATO beyond its interventionist and somehow neocolonial goals has the ambition to become also a political force ready to dominate not only the military, but also the political world order.

The undersigned therefore are taking up this new challenge by launching a CAMPAIGN OF HISTORICAL TRUTH in order to counteract the historic lies of NATO by revealing

- that NATO lied when it promised the dismantling of its alliance together with the Warsaw-pact at the end of the cold war;

- that NATO lied when it presented and still presents the war in the Ukraine as a consequence of the territorial ambitions of Russia when in reality it had prepared already before, together with the European Union, to break the constitutional order using forces from the extreme right of Ukraine;

- that NATO lies when it presents the upsurge of Al Qaida and the so called "Islamic State" as a historical accident, when in reality these terrorist forces owe their existence to the historic crime of an interventionist war of the leading forces of NATO based on the lie that the Iraqi government disposed of weapons of mass destruction;

- that NATO lies when it presents their operations in the Mediterranean Sea implemented in alliance with the European Union as a war against human trafficking when in reality it is a war on refugees

All these facts and many others more should be revealed counteracting the biggest of all lies which is telling that NATO guarantees world wide security when in reality it has become the most destabilizing force threatening world peace and the existence of hundreds of millions through their waste of money and resources, like it has been shown during the NATO-summit in Warsaw.

Warsaw July 10th, 2016

Signatures:

Leo Gabriel, Coordinator of www.peacinsyria.org

Tord Björk, Activists for peace, Sweden

No to NATO in Warsaw

Six organizations of the Polish peace and social movements together with the international Network Not o War – No to NATO conducted the alternative summit "No to War – No to Militarism – Yes to Refugees" and the demonstration "Money for the Hungry not for Tanks" in Warsaw from July 8th to 10th. Aim of the protests actions was the continuous delegitimation of the largest military organization of the world which is permanently and worldwide engaged in wars. The international network No to War – No to NATO has been conducting actions of protest and discussions around each NATO Summit since 2009.

The seize of the protest actions was positively surprising after several months of preparation and learning of the specific and difficult situation of the Polish people and social movements particularly of those being in opposition to NATO. More than 150 people from 18 countries – among others from Russia, GB, Belgium and Spain – discussed about actual wars and conflicts, the constitution of peace, social justice and common security in Europe at the counter summit. The demonstration was conducted with more than 300 participants. Considering the Polish repressions against "Putin understanders" and people in opposition to NATO and militarization, the demonstration was surely a success. The police's tension expressed itself among others in the hindrance of a group of anarchists "armed" with baguettes to participate in the demonstration. Only after 90 minutes the demonstration was able to move



Graffiti in the Jewish ghetto in Vilnius 2016.

A visit to Vilnius after Warsaw

The editor of this newsletter was able to visit David Katz in Vilnius after the Warsaw summit. Katz is persistently criticizing the way Eastern European countries are making Nazi collaborators into national heroes and obfuscating the Holocaust. In earlier years he could get support from Western countries embassies but not any longer. The use of history is becoming controversial in Europe. A historical museum on WWII in Gdansk was supposed to be something new, a museum that shows the war from many perspectives and not only the national point of view. It included also criticism against the participation of Poles in the Holocaust. The ambitious museum has now been stopped.

Katz' webpage:: defendinghistory.com

Polish museum controversy: Timothy Snyder in New York Review of Books, May 3 2016

towards its destination to the Vistula River.

The participants were united in their demand of the dissolution of NATO. The participants were concerned about the actual dangers of increasing militarism and the increasing militarization of Eastern Europe, particularly because of the permanently rotating troops, the aggressive maneuvers and NATO's so called missile defense shield. Many participants reflected that a scenario of a "great war in Europe" is not unthinkable anymore. The participants agreed that the peace movement faces its greatest challenges in years. The NATO infused confrontation with Russia, the global projects of armament like the so called missile defense shield and the modernization of nuclear weapons must be terminated in order to give a process of cooperation in Europe a chance. The deployments of NATO-military structures to the western border of Russia as well as Russia's reaction bear the danger of a consciously triggered war or a war by accident. The alternative is a common and cooperative system of security which focusses on the needs of the people. The final plenary of the counter summit demanded the strengthening of OSCE and a new edition of the Helsinki Pro-

cess as well as a strengthening and democratization of the UN system. A peaceful development is only possible via cooperation of peoples.

The demonstration against NATO happened under the slogan "Money for the hungry not for tanks – No to War and NATO Bases – Moscow Has Already Been, We Do Not Want Washington – Yes to Refugees and international solidarity". More than 300 protesters demonstrated colorfully and peacefully, starting at Charles de Gaulle Square, passing the US embassy and ending at the shores of Vistula River in sight of the national stadium, the location of the NATO Summit. Ann Wright, pensioned Colonel of the US Army, called on the US government to disarm and to actively engage in peace with Russia. The rally in front of the US embassy was a highlight of the protests.

On Sunday the participants of the alternative summit discussed about networking and future actions of the peace movement. The discussions centered around international networking and exchange. The weekend of protests was a positive example of both. In the eye of the expansion of NATO military bases to the East exchange between people from Central and Eastern Europe is particularly important. The organizers decided to continue their work in a Polish-German peace network. One idea are common actions of protest at the bases of the so called missile defense shield. A new military base for "Aegis Ashore" is being built in Redzikowo.

Some media institutions stated after the summit that NATO is flexing its muscles. The inner city of Warsaw offered insights in what this means: more than



10,000 police men and security forces turned the city center into a high security area. Blocked main roads lamed the city for hours. The citizens who could afford it spend the weekend elsewhere. At times the city seemed to be in a state of emergency, seemed to be dead. The close connection with the military-industrial complex could be viewed opposite to the Cultural Palace: the weapons manufacturer Raytheon advertised largely for their "Layered Missile Defense – Partnership for Protection".

NATO announced the next location for their summit. Brussels was perceived positively by the participants. In Belgium and Brussels well connected grassroots organizations and a strong peace movement exists. Larger protests seem possible, our preparations have already begun.

Kristine Karch, Lucas Wirl and Reiner Braun from No to War – No to NATO

A report by a US activists, Videos, Pictures, and more can be viewed on www.no-to-nato.org.

Photos by Lucas Wirl, front page and page 3. Other photos by Tord Björk

Food not bombs! was the message on the banners of the anarchists at the demo. When they were not carrying baguettes to make their point as on this picture.



Below: Warsaw graffiti against Frontex war against refugees now to be a joint EU-NATO military effort.



PS2 at WSF

WSF 2016 MONTREAL

World Social Forum will be held in Montreal August 9-14. Participate in the extended WSF through the net.

Read more at: fsm2016.org

FOOD/RURAL STRUGGLE

Environmental and peasant movement gathers strength at European food sovereignty forum in Romania in September.

Read more at nyelenieurope.net

ALTER SUMMIT

Alter Summit unites different movements and is holding a conference in Brussels August 25-26 against austerity to connect struggles.

Read more at altersummit.eu



Photo from PS2 workshop with participants from Donetsk and Kiev on Ukraine at WSF 2015 in Tunis

Europe after Brexit, Ukraine and war

How can social movements act in the new situation in Europe after the Brexit vote in UK? This is one of the issues addressed by the Prague Spring 2 Network against right wing extremism and populism (PS2) at WSF in Montreal.

Another issue is War, Ukraine and the Rise of the Far Right. Both seminars address issues of concern for the present global situation with strengthened austerity politics with countries like Ukraine and Greece as authoritarian models.

Contact address for the PS2 seminars at WSF: hermann.dworzak@gmx.at

PS2 have been addressing the double European crisis in relation to the East-West and North-South conflict. PS2 persistently work to follow up on seminars held at the WSF in Tunis, CEE Social Forum in Wroclaw and the NATO Alternative Summit in Warsaw on Ukraine, war and the far right. Hermann Dworzak, Mirek Prokes, Leo Gabriel represents PS2 at WSF in Montreal.

Statement on Ukraine

from workshop at the Alternative Summit in Warsaw.

We participants at the NATO Alternative Summit “No to War – No to Militarism – Yes to Refugees” are inspired by the reports from opponents of war in Ukraine. We demand an end of the systematic violations of human rights in Ukraine often directed against anti-war activists. There must be an end of the killing, sending to prison and silencing peace opinion by governmental or far right violence. We demand an end to selective defence of human rights and stress the need of addressing violations equally in any country.

We call especially upon support for civil society dialogue across the

frontline in the Ukrainian conflict. This needs much more attention together with humanitarian aid efforts supporting all victims. Economic links and humanitarian contacts across the present-day frontline should be restored. War mongering interference of different kinds by foreign powers should be replaced by peace building!



Central Eastern European Social Forum 2016:

STOP MILITARISATION! DISSOLVE NATO!

300 participants from Central and Eastern Europe gathered at the Social Forum in Wroclaw from March 11th to 13th 2016. Experiences were exchanged on the peripheral situation of the CEE countries in cooperation with Southern European, North African and Latin American countries and with the participation by skype of Samir Amin from Egypt and Mazin Qumsyeh from Palestine, in order to outline common political goals for the future.

Militarization, racism, antifascism, feminism, refugees, neo colonialism, environment, peripherization, workers rights and devastating consequences of the system change in CEE and the current popular uprisings in Southern Countries were addressed in 13 session. The participants unanimously demanded the dissolution of NATO and to stop militarisation. The joint declaration also gave special support for the people in Ukraine being now under the pressure of NATO as well as ensured full solidarity with the anti-austerity struggle in Greece.

Read more at: <http://social-forum.pl/>

