



Austria: 1500 school students strike against right wing coalition government

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ON 13 JANUARY tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Vienna against the new Austrian government, formed by the conservative Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and the far-right Freedom Party (FPÖ).

The 'Black-Blue' coalition, so-called from the parties' colours, is planning the worst attacks on the working class and youth since 2000 when there was the first ÖVP-FPÖ government. What refugees can expect was revealed by FPÖ Interior Minister Herbert Kickel who said they should all be 'concentrated' in special centres.

A total of seven feeder marches coming from various directions all converged on Vienna's Heldenplatz (a big central square faced by government buildings) to protest against the inauguration of the racist and neoliberal government. Trade unions and the Austrian Socialist Party (SPÖ) and young socialist organisations joined the march.

Together with other groups, we organized a school strike to protest against the racist policies and social cuts in general, and in particular against the deterioration of the education system. It proved a great success with 1,500 students from various schools taking part.

We demonstrated against the segregation of people without 'adequate German?', against the reintroduction of grades in elementary schools, against the influence of businesses in the school system, against the cancellation of social benefits if students do not behave adequately and last but not least against tuition fees, which make it harder for people from poorer families to go to university.

Many people believed President Van der Bellen, a former member of the Green Party, could be the barrier against a far-right government and last year called for a vote for him. We disagreed saying he was no partner in the fight against the organised right. How right we were. He immediately announced that he would not try to stop the formation of this government. Resistance to the right must come from the streets, schools and workplaces. The liberal left is no real opposition!

But we cannot leave it with just a day of protest, no matter how militant, because this government will not be so easily impressed. We have to go out on the streets against any attack on the youth and the working people and organise the resistance.

Our most important message to young people is to get organised and active, and organise yourselves. Join us in the youth group REVOLUTION, fighting against this government, against racism, sexism and oppression. We fight for a world without exploitation and oppression, for the overthrow of capitalism and for socialism!