

# RISING STAR



Read, organise, fight.



## WHY ORGANISE?

Liberation can not exist alone - but together we will win! We must come together to achieve our goals.

## COP26 & A REVOLUTIONARY PERSPEKTIVE

Everyone is talkign about climate chance, time to take action against it. System change not climate change!

## TEXAS HEARTBEAT ACT

A bounty on womens freedom? Womens rights are under fire once again. We will not stay silent!

# TO BEGIN...

Every new journal or magazine must first explain its goals and reason for existence. Here is ours:

As students and working youth, migrants and natives, we are establishing **Rising Star** as a platform to discuss the future of all youth living in Britain.

Violence against women is increasing; police violence is becoming more brutal; poverty, homelessness and child hunger are only getting worse, even as the rich get richer and raise our rents. Ecological developments are rapidly making our planet uninhabitable; schools and universities are being run like factories, treating their students as commodities; and racist violence against immigrants is on the rise.

The pandemic revealed the crisis of inequality even more clearly: while the rich turned their villas into private hospitals, the poor died in their homes.

But what about the other side of the coin?

People are rising up. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets; against racism, against new police powers, and in solidarity with the oppressed in Palestine. Countless young women have taken up the struggle against sexual violence. And young people are leading humanity's call to save our future on this planet.

**Rising Star** will add its voice to these struggles. We will read, write, and act together, as the youth of many nations and one. Getting started is the first step on this path. Our voices will only grow, as we walk to claim the future.

Join our strength.

**Rising Star** Editorial Board

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK!

Criticism, suggestions and articles are always welcome. Even if you want to support revolutionary press: get in touch with us.

We can be reached here:

@ **YoungStruggleLondon**





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# WHY ORGANISE?



We all grow up in capitalist states. From birth, we are instilled with capitalist morality and raised to think in capitalist ideals.

Individualism is our modern religion. Celebrities dripped in gold and high-flying CEOs, the world's Musks and Kardashians are our gods. Ads and billboards on every screen and street corner preach endless consumption as the road to happiness, which we all must walk alone. Solutions to our problems are presented just as individually:

"Don't be so lazy!", "Get a better job!", "Take up yoga!"

- only to feed an endless cycle of hopelessness, isolation and unfulfillment. The process of organising, of joining forces with others to pursue some goal, is something so fundamental to regular life that it seems non-political. It starts with banal, everyday tasks like moving a table from A to B, making lunch together or simply planning your evening. These situations pass us by, seemingly without great significance. But when we take a closer look, these

moments all show us one vital thing: we are not alone in the world. With cooperation, consultation and planning, we can achieve more collectively than alone. A political organisation is an expression of that same basic idea; that

**individuals must come together to achieve their goals.**



Of course, these goals might go a little way beyond planning a picnic. Ultimately, they can be as high as changing the world.

In an age of endless crisis, political organisation is more important than ever. The attacks of capitalism and the state on our rights have been on the rise for years. While low-waged key workers carried on through the pandemic, crowded together on public transport and in cramped apartments to keep our country going, high-salaried white-collar workers got furlough and the elite sat back in luxury.

As individuals, we are powerless against the might of capitalism. But if we organise ourselves against our oppressors, united by common demands; if we contrast the power of a handful of capitalists with the power of millions of workers, we have more than a fighting chance at victory.

We have seen this kind of organisation at gig economy companies like Uber and Deliveroo in London, in binmen strikes, in actions by immigrant cleaners at UK airports and train stations for higher wages, better contracts and employment rights. This country has a proud fighting history of trade unions, of workers organising against the biggest companies and winning; and of protest, like the Poll Tax riots that helped bring Thatcher to her knees.

Strikes and protests like this are an important part of the political struggle. Mass movements and broad platforms can have a strong impact on particular issues; but in terms of building political power and making real systemic change, they only get us so far. The step from individual to group is just one part of the story.

This is where the communist organisation comes in. Our goal is not just to fix one problem, organise one workplace or change one law - it is the liberation of all humanity.

Capitalism can offer young people no future, no vision and no hope. We, on the other hand, can say clearly and unequivocally what we are fighting for:

a socialist society,  
free from  
exploitation and  
oppression.

As the propaganda of a dying capitalist elite insists that there is no alternative, we must show them up for the liars they are.

To win this struggle we must have clear goals and a clear programme, backed by strong organisation - only then can we convince people to show courage in the face of repression and adversity. An individual alone can lose hope in themselves, become lost and disheartened - but as part of an organisation which knows what it's fighting for, that same individual will have the power of the collective to pick them up again.

The pandemic has shown us just how isolating and hopeless life under capitalism can be. But fighting to change this reality is what it means to truly live; and change is only possible when we join forces and pursue our goals as one.

Liberation  
cannot exist  
alone -  
but together  
we will win!



A group of people, likely activists, are shown from the waist up. They are wearing dark hooded jackets and balaclavas. One person on the left is holding a long stick or pole. The background is a dense green forest. The overall tone is serious and activist.

# COP26

## and a revolutionary perspektive

Forrests are burning all around the globe, the icecaps are melting, the weather is getting hotter and hotter, water is running out, the oceans are filled with trash and it seems like eventhough the fight against climate change is more and more in the news and something that is talked about, there isnt much that is actually done against it.



From the 1st of november to the 12th of november political leaders from all around the world will come to Glasgow for the UN Climate Change conference. The spectacel is called 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties or short COP26. 5 Years after the Climate Change Conference in Paris, where the Paris climate agreement was signed, climate change has become more and more of a treat to humanity that even the nations in the global north start to feel the consequences of. With floods, rising Sea levels and a steady increase of temperature it has come to everyones attention that the time to act is now. The fight is not only about limiting the impact of climate change but also about keeping the temperature below a certain point. These points are called "tipping points". After these tipping points would be reached climate change would fuel itself. We are in the process of reaching these points. Today we can see that the permafrost, a layer of frozen ground in Siberia and other regions around the arctic, is melting and releasing methane and CO2. But not only the permafrost is part of it, it also includes the amazon rainforest, the ice caps and the circulation of water in the Atlantic.

As mentioned before in 2016 the Paris climate agreement was signed by 194 nations. There the goal was set to keep the temperature by the end of the century below 2 degrees celsius and even try to aim for a temperature increase of only 1.5 degrees celsius. However 5 years later it is clear that despite the ambitious plans and goals none of them were actually accomplished.

Right now the World is heading for an increase of 3° Celsius until

the end of the century and we have already heated up the earth by 1,1° C.

Scientists as well as a recently leaked Report by the IPCC ( Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ) say that by 2030 the mark of reaching the 1,5° C mark will be reached. This means that the next years are crucial for the fight against Climate Change. And it is obvious that one country on its own will not stop climate change.

With that we come back to COP26 in Glasgow. And of course the question is "Will they be able to successfully do something against Climate Change?". The answer for is obviously "No." While great speeches are being held by political leaders all around the globe and promises are being made to make policies for more green energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the world is still on its way to a total climate collapse.

## BUT WHY IS THIS?

Isn't the World we live on way more important than anything else? Isn't the life of millions of people, animals and plants more important to save than the economy? Of course it is. So, what exactly is stopping politicians to do something and why can we say that however the outcome of COP26 will be it won't be enough to effectively battle Climate Change?

The answer lies within the system. The question of stopping Climate Change can't be taken out of its context that is modern society and capitalism. While

bourgeois scientists are looking at climate change as a man-made problem they are unable to fully comprehend where it comes from and why it can't be stopped under capitalism. They divide Climate change from the general mode of production in society which always results in bourgeois answers to it like making fuel, meat and plastic more expensive, banning single use straws and plastic bags. It generally shifts the responsibility to the individual. But it fails to really give a solution. All these measures are in their core just directed against poor people who will have it harder to afford things like groceries or won't be able to go to work with their car.

The Problem with regulations like these is that they make stuff just more expensive and are unable to provide an adequate alternative which people can switch to therefore making life for poor people harder while the rich can stick to their habits and fly around the world in their private jets because they can simply afford it. On the other hand these regulations really don't change anything. As we already said the problem why climate change can't be stopped in our current system lies within the mode of production. It is important to understand how material goods and commodities are being produced.

We live in an economic system called "Capitalism". As many politicians say and most of us know there is something called the "free market" through which things are supposed to be regulated. The "free market" consists out of companies and international monopolies that stand in direct competition to each other. There is no uni-

versal plan after which things are produced just companys that produce the same commodities. The Problem lies within the competition between the companys. It is a ground rule of capitalism that companys need to make profits or else they will go bankrupt. This however leads to an overestimation from multiple companies over a limited amount of people that could buy their comodities. The result is that they have to produce for a much cheaper price so that people decide for their product.

## HOW CAN THEY DO THAT?

One way is to get cheaper materials. Another way is to pay their workers less but even then you can't pay the workers nothing. The third option is to improve the means of production. This for example means producing more in the same time. By doing this the value of the product falls. (The value of a commodity comes from the avarage time that is required to produce it. So by lowering the time that is needed to produce a commodity, the capitalist is at the same time lowering the value of the commodity.)

Now that the commodity is produced with less value it is cheaper to sell but also makes less profit to the capitalist. So to keep up with the profits he had before the companies need to produce more. So naturally more factories are build. And we can see where this le-

ads to. International Companys use their power and influence to continue exploiting nature and workers all over the world. They can use the power of chosing where to "create" jobs and where to close factories to presure politicians in the capitalist centers. But that is not the only way corruption is another thing. Generally we can say that the state is not something that exists above society rather it is a tool of the capitalist class to defend and expand its profits and influence around the globe.

From this mode of production other problems emerge as well like wars, poverty, colonialism, racism, fascism, overproduction and regular crises of the capitalist system.

As we see capitalism requires an endless growth of production to survive. But on a Planet with limited recourses this is impossible to achieve and just leads to the destruction of the envionment.



# JOIN THE FIGHT FOR A BETTER FUTURE!

NO CONFERENCE WILL CHANGE THIS SYSTEM!



JOIN US AT THE PROTESTS AGAINST THE  
UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CONFERENCE  
IN GLASGOW ON NOVEMBER 6TH

MESSAGE US!

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# WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE STATE

**T**here is often confusion about what Communists mean by “the state”, and especially the concept of “smashing the state”.

In April 2017, polling found that over half of young people in Ireland “would join an uprising against the state” - and we salute them. But this does not mean we want to do away with hospitals, traffic regulations, the rule of law - instead, it means that we would overthrow those in charge of the current state - the rich and their allies - and put pro-people forces in charge instead.

For Marxists, this means establishing a workers’ state, or a socialist state.

This represents a fundamental change in the nature of the state: no longer are laws about protecting the property of the rich from the masses; they must now enable the masses to build their own society on a planned, democratic and equal basis.

Typically, this means the creation of a new constitution, the enshrining of guaranteed “social rights” for each

citizen, e.g. the right to a job, the right to food and medicine, a roof over your head. It leads to the breaking up of the armed and coercive structures of the capitalist state, like armies and prisons, and their re-establishment in structures which empower the people to repress and imprison their exploiters.

When we have replaced all the structures of parliament, the civil service, the courts, police and armed forces, with new, socialist structures, and used them to take democratic control over all aspects of economy and society - we consider the bourgeois state, the state of the rich, to have been “smashed.”

## Beginnings

**S**ince the days of the First International, when Karl Marx and the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin led the alliance of Europe’s working class, an ideological struggle has raged beneath the banner of socialism.

The Marxists, on the one hand, recognised that the road to a classless society will be a long and tumultuous struggle, filled with obstacles and adversity.

To overcome these challenges, and defend the revolution, they believed that the organised working class must wield full political, military and economic power - it must establish a workers’ state.

“The State is a weapon of class struggle, a machine by which one class represses another. Every state is the dictatorship of a definite class. So long as the state exists, it cannot possibly stand above class or belong to the whole people.”

The anarchists and similar radicals, opposing on principle the very idea of authority, rejected this. For them, the state is a completely evil institution





which has oppressed the peoples of the world over millennia for no good reason. For them, talk of forming a new state amounted only to exchanging one tyranny for another.

Such radicals are correct to reject liberal notions of the state: it is not a neutral or paternalistic entity simply overseeing society and balancing the interests of all its citizens. But they go no further than this in their analysis, simply dismissing the state outright. We Communists say that prisons are bad when used by the rich to oppress the poor, but prisons under socialism will reform rather than punish, and train antisocial people for life in a new society; the anarchists get as far as "prisons are bad."

This approach goes for the whole state. While we declare that a socialist state must provide and manage our shared property like housing, transport, education and food, the anarchists believe that any kind of state will oppress and exploit us in the end.

Anarchism turned out to be small-minded, negative and simply wrong about

the potential of working class power, while Marxism accurately predicted the future. But today, many radicals still carry a lot of the anti-state baggage of anarchist thinking, believing that the idea of revolution is to abolish the state overnight. As for how you then build socialism, who knows!

This kind of idealism has its roots in the lack of a good materialist understanding of the true nature and origin of the state. The state did not fall from the sky because some people are just mean and greedy. Where, then, does state power come from? Is it always reactionary, or can it be wielded against reaction? Is the worker's state necessary for the triumph of socialism?

## The state is a weapon of class struggle

**T**he state is not an eternal institution. It has not always existed; nor

will it exist forever. For many tens of thousands of years, under what we call primitive communism, mankind was organised into small, egalitarian groups which made their living hunting and gathering. Everyone had to work together to make just enough food survive - and no one individual had any more than anyone else.

During this era, no state structure existed to oversee or command these groups - there was no need! So what caused the state to arise? Put simply, the state came into being only when, after advances in the methods of production and the division of labour, society had divided itself into classes.

Once we began to farm and produce more, we created property which our orangutan cousins do not have: they do not have bags of grain stored for winter, they do not have a favourite axe - and they do not have spare grain or a spare axe to trade with others. And the more production grew, the more unequal life became: one group of people accumulated more food or wealth than another group and began to exploit them, forcing them to work

or fight for them to accumulate even more.

An alliance of farmers with good land, stable food supplies and weapons could simply form an army to subjugate those with less - and so we have the first class relationship between two opposed classes: the relationship between slaveholders and slaves.

In *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels writes: "The State is by no means a power forced on society from without... Rather, it is a product of society at a certain stage of development; it is the admission that this society has split into irreconcilable antagonisms which it is powerless to dispel. In order that these antagonisms, these classes with conflicting economic interests, might not consume themselves and society in fruitless struggle, it became necessary to have a power, seemingly standing above society, that would alleviate the conflict and keep it within the bounds of 'order'; this power, arisen out of society but placing itself above it... is the State."

The relationship between slaveholders and slaves was not a peaceful one. Slaves had nothing to lose, no pay or property, so after a certain point of exploitation they simply wouldn't take it anymore: throughout the epoch there were countless rebellions, from the Spartacus uprising in the Third Servile War to the Haitian revolts against the French. Left to their own devices, the struggle between exploiter and exploited would quickly have reached such a violent point that society would break down, and no consistent farming could take place.

The slaveholders as a class realised they would not benefit from this arrangement - after all, what's the point in keeping slaves if they rebel so often that they can't work? The slaveholder class therefore had to establish an overarching power,

standing above all the individual slaveholders, to moderate and manage the class struggle; to hold down the exploited and enforce the legal limits of their exploitation, ensuring it wasn't so extreme that society couldn't function; in short, to prevent the eruption of the class struggle into chaos - but only so that slavery itself could continue.

This meant setting aside resources to put down slave revolts and capture escapees (the first police force); but also punishing the worst abuses and ensuring slaveholders played by the rules. There were rules against massacring all your slaves, just like today there are rules about setting your factory or shopping centre on fire and ordering all your employees to jump off a bridge. Property and the process of exploitation must be protected in the interests of the whole ruling class, not just individual exploiters.

So the state is not an alien force imposed from outside of society, but instead arises out of society itself, and reflects the economic relations within. In short, it is an organisation of class rule - of the legalised violence and repression of the ruling class for the purposes of protecting and perpetuating their system of exploitation. The current state exists to enforce the laws which allow Sainsbury's to hoard £30 billion while their workers get 7 quid an hour, and starving single mothers are arrested for stealing sandwiches and sanitary towels.

The modern capitalist state is the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, an instrument for holding down the exploited wage labourers of the working class. It consists not only of the army and police, but also prisons, tax collectors, government agencies and institutions of all kinds. Even when these appear innocent, they exist primarily to moderate the exploitation of the working class by the bourgeoisie and keep capitalism running.

It was only when the bourgeoisie realised they needed healthier and more educated workers, and feared Soviet-style revolution, that they set aside resources for things like universal schools, hospitals and social housing. After the fall of the USSR and destruction of the trade unions, they no longer felt those concessions were necessary - giving us the age of neoliberalism, privatisation and austerity. In the future, private police will keep sick workers from the doors of private hospitals and throw them in private jails for trespassing on private property - this is already the reality in some modern capitalist states.

## The dictatorship of the proletariat

"Between capitalist and communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*

The worker's state, or dictatorship of the proletariat, is the first state of its kind in history. While all previous states have been used by an elite minority (slaver emperors, kings, lords, and nobles, then bankers, investors and capitalists today) and their paid politicians for the oppression of the majority, the dictatorship of the proletariat is the organised will of the majority: the great mass of workers, armed and organised against their former exploiters.

Having overthrown the exploiters, the working class can protect and en-



force its interests only through holding state power. Their immediate task is the defence of the revolution: the capitalist class, the most powerful class of exploiters ever known to history, will not simply accept their defeat. We have seen this countless times, as with the so-called Cuban exiles in Miami who have killed 3,400 Cubans in terror attacks in an attempt to overthrow socialism and reclaim the land and money they left behind when fleeing the revolution in 1959.

After the October Revolution in Russia, when the workers and peasants of the Russian Empire overthrew the Provisional Government, no less than fourteen capitalist countries rushed to the aid of the exploiters and invaded the young socialist republic. The Soviet working class, holding the levers of state power and commanding the support of the masses, was able to direct all the resources of the country to the defence of the revolution – the vicious campaign to reverse the tide was defeated in war. Every socialist needs to understand that this war is inevitable – as every capitalist knows.

Even moves to the left made within elections and parliamentary systems risk being ruthlessly crushed by the bourgeoisie. When the Chilean people voted in Marxist Salvador Allende, he hesitated to arm the people and use the state to crush the counter-revolutionary capitalist forces; so they got there first. With US backing, Allende's was overthrown and killed by the military under brutal neoliberal dictator Pinochet, who then went on to murder 40,000 people – especially communists and socialists.

This all is to say – they know what we are up to! No amount of pleading or explaining will help – capitalism doesn't care that we are struggling to pay our rent, overworked and sick, starving and homeless. We created their property, but if we try to share it

among ourselves they will kill us without hesitation. So in taking power, we must employ all the resources at our disposal in order to crush the resistance of the capitalist class and wipe out the counter-revolution. This will require a high level of organisation, and the combined efforts of the whole population.

A similar degree of organisation is necessary for the building of socialism. In order to utilise and grow the resources of an entire country in the most efficient way possible, and ensure that the whole population reaps the benefit of increased production, a central economic plan is essential. The working class must command every aspect of the economy in order to build the foundations for communism – this is another essential part of the worker's state. As Lenin put it:

"The proletariat needs state power, a centralized organization of force, an organization of violence, both to crush the resistance of the exploiters and to lead the enormous mass of the population... in the work of organizing a socialist economy."

## The development of communism

Marx describes two phases of communist society. The first, "socialism", arising immediately after the overthrow of capitalism, is the dictatorship of the proletariat as described above. But this society is "stamped with the birthmarks of the old society from whose womb it comes". Problems remain such as shortages, unequal levels of skill and education and the need to devote a lot of resources to the defence of the revolution itself.

These problems must be dealt with as practically as possible, hence the need for strong centralisation and planning. As the proletariat is victo-

rious in more and more countries; as the exploiters grow weaker and are finally vanquished on all fronts; as production grows and practical problems such as scarcity and inequality are resolved – one by one, the necessary functions of the workers' state disappear.

It is at this stage, where true equality and true abundance are realised, that a stateless society can finally be achieved. While the capitalist state is abolished by revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat – the state in its final historical form – simply withers away. Only then can the narrow horizon of capitalist economic law be left behind, and society at last inscribe on its banners that great proclamation of freedom and equality:

**From each  
according to  
their ability to  
each according  
to their needs!**

To take state power for ourselves is the first, most crucial step towards that final liberation. Whatever our daily tasks, we must constantly reaffirm that socialism ultimately means taking state power away from the capitalists. Not sharing power, not having a voice, not better conditions – we want the lot. The future belongs to the workers – we must be prepared to seize it.

# TEXAS HEARTBEAT ACT

## A bounty on womens freedom

Women around the world have fought for the right to safe abortions for centuries. This right, which is fundamental for a woman's physical self-determination, is constantly being attacked by religious and patriarchal powers.

Safe and legal abortions were won in Argentina only a few months ago; in Ireland in 2018. In Poland abortion is still prohibited without exceptions, even in cases of rape, incest and serious health complications. While abortion is legal up to 24 weeks in the UK, it is still regulated under criminal law; and it's partially criminalised and restricted in EU countries like Germany.

The Guttmacher Institute said that 2021 is "the worst legislative year ever for US abortion rights." In the United States, 90 abortion restrictions were enacted in the first six months. The latest attack is the Texas Heartbeat Act, which went into effect on September 1st.

This prohibits abortions from the time of the fetus' first heartbeat - about six weeks into pregnancy -

again, with no exceptions for rape or incest. It is very rare for a pregnancy to be even identified at such an early stage - almost all cases of unplanned pregnancy are not discovered until much later. So the Act, made possible by a conservative majority in the Supreme Court, has effectively

"WE WILL  
NOT  
STAY  
SILENT!"

banned legal abortion in Texas. This is not a new phenomenon in the US. Many conservative states have tried to introduce similar laws; but courts usually block them on the basis that they violate Roe v. Wade, a landmark 1973 ruling by the Supreme Court to guarantee safe abortions across the country.

But the Texas law was cleverly worded to invalidate any such case aga-

inst it: what is special about the Act is that control and penalties for abortions won't be directly administered by the state. Instead, it provides for private individuals to give anonymous tips about a person who has an abortion, the doctor who carries it out and anyone who supports or abets the procedure by paying for it or simply driving to the clinic - making them liable to private prosecution. The tipster can then effectively sue these individuals for \$10,000.

The law removes government agencies from the process and is therefore difficult to challenge constitutionally. It creates a kind of vigilante justice which encourages snitching; outsourcing the policing of women's bodies to private citizens. What results is a climate of fear and insecurity in which the subject of abortion is taboo, dividing society and forcing women into the shadows.

## DEMAND SAFE ABORTIONS NOW!

Safe abortions should be basic universal healthcare, but they are freely available in only a handful of countries. These bans endanger women's lives. They do nothing to decrease the number of abortions, but only make them more dangerous. There are 22 million unsafe abortions worldwide every year, in which 47,000 women die from complications - making illegal abortions the leading cause of maternal mortality.

## ABORTIONS ARE A CLASS ISSUE

Capitalism in general survives on the unpaid reproductive labour of women, and it is mostly poor and working women who suffer from strict abortion laws. A wealthy woman in Texas can find the time and money to cross state lines for an abortion



laws. A wealthy woman in Texas can find the time and money to cross state lines for an abortion clinic. A worker, who is confronted much more starkly with the question of what kind of life they can offer their child, cannot. Even where abortions are legal, the cost is often unmanageable, meaning that not having enough cash on hand that month is often the deciding factor in whether a woman chooses to become a mother. This must end.

September 28th was International Safe Abortion Day. Women of the world took to the streets to fight for their right to physical and sexual self-determination; to demand that abortions are recognised as basic health care which should be free, accessible, and safe for all.

“Women  
everywhere,  
fight for your  
rights!”

As the Sarah Everard murder trial wraps up and Britain contends with the death of yet another woman, Sabina Nessa, at the hands of a predatory man, it is more important than ever that women continue to unite their voices against patriarchy and male domination.

From Argentina to Ireland, London to Texas, we are on the streets fighting for our right to choose what we do with our own bodies.

Women fighting international:  
A long fight on the streets led to the  
legalisation of abortion in Argentina 2021.  
The sign reads “fight today to not die  
tomorrow”





# ROJAVA IS OUR HOPE!

On the 7th of March 2015 around 03.00am, our friend and comrade Ivana Hoffman fell in the fight against ISIS in Til Temir, Northern Syria. She was the first international volunteer from Germany, and became the first German to die in the defence of the Rojava Revolution.

Taking after the international martyrs Ashley Johnson and Konstantinos Erik Scurfield, her sacrifice carried the spirit of Rojava to the world. Her death is a painful loss for us, yet in many ways it allowed us to widen our horizons - comrade Ivana Hoffman became a fiery beacon of internationalism and the women's revolution, calling into being a new generation of comrades and militants.

Ivana Hoffman was born on the 1st of September 1995 in Emmerich, northwest Germany; the daughter of a German mother and a migrant father from Togo, Africa.

There she grew up with her mother and step-sister until they moved to Duisburg. Her childhood and youth were marked by her love for life, happiness and rebellious spirit. Be it playing football or making music, Ivana was always noticeable for her relaxed and laid-back manner.

With a strong hunger for justice, Ivana showed an interest in world affairs from an early age. The struggle for Kurdish autonomy, to which she was introduced to by Kurdish friends, started to play a big role in her life. Her deep connection with the oppressed of our world knew few limits, showing through her internationalist manner.

Be it the independence struggle of African peoples against colonialism, the fight for LGBTI+ equality, or the student strikes for free and fair education for all, Ivana was always connected to the struggle for justice and a better life. After joining the socialist youth group Young Struggle at only 15, her organisational and political development rapidly progressed until she was a self-confident, devoted revolutionary — a role model for many.

Ivana soon stood out in Young Struggle through her fortitude and sincerity, but also through her charm and humor. She approached tasks responsibly and was always eager to learn and develop further. Ivana was on the forefront of all youth work, from the protest tents against the demolition of the Zinkhuetten settlement and hunger strikes to the educa-

tion strikes in which she was a representative. She wrote for the Young Struggle magazine and did not neglect to read it either, contributing in every way.

“I know what awaits me and I know the importance of this struggle”

This multifaceted youth work earned Ivana a wide circle of friends whom she constantly tried to accommodate, convince and politicise. Everywhere she went in her home of Duisburg-Meiderich, Ivana was a valued and well-liked individual. The last letter of Ivana Hoffmann, dedicated to her comrades and party before she went to join therevolution in Rojava.

To my comrades,  
my party.

“I can no longer distinguish the most beautiful of colours, I no longer feel the city breeze on my skin, the singing birds sound like a desperate call for freedom. I have made my decision. For days and nights on end I have lived with this thought, today is the day I will take the step, with intent as strong as the current of river Dicle-Firat. I want to be a part of the revolution in Rojava, I want to develop myself, in these 6 months I want to learn the struggle which unites all, and if necessary give my life to defend the revolution in Rojava.

I know what awaits me, I know the importance of this struggle. I will face adversity and come to realise which capitalist instincts I still follow, I will suppress and fight these. I will know how it feels to carry a weapon and fight for the revolution, against imperialism.

I will experience a different life, more intense more organised. Perhaps I will reach my limits and fall behind, but I will never give up my spirit to fight, I will carry on. Nothing keeps me here anymore. I cannot stand back while my sisters, brothers, friends, mothers, fathers, my comrades, fight for independence and freedom from capitalism. I will be part of the organised armed struggle and advocate the internationalism of our party.

When I return, I will inspire my comrades and my surroundings with fighting spirit and volition, I will



**I V A N A**







be like a beautiful song and fascinate those around me. I will be a guerrilla full of compassion and hope.

Long live our party! Long live the revolution!  
Long live socialism! Your Comrade, Ivana Hoffman

## A pioneer of the womens revolution

Of the many causes which excited Ivana, the liberation of women always came first. She was a cofounder of Young Struggle's women's work, utilising her natural and well-developed gender awareness. As a young communist, her struggle to become a pioneer of the revolution was central to her character.

She understood very early on what it meant to take on this responsibility as a woman: To take one's freedom into one's own female hands — and conquer it. Fighting where life is Fighting women worldwide, especially the Kurdish women guerillas in the armed struggle, were both an inspiration and a longing for Ivana. This hunger for life as a guerilla, to fight every day and with every breath for freedom, became overwhelming.

Comrade Ivana left a lot behind. She lived in the tradition of internationalists like Andrea Wolf and Uta Schneidanger. As the first international to fall in the struggle for Kurdistan, when her body returned to Europe to be buried, a lot more came with it. For those of us in Europe, Ivana forged the conditions to live as a revolutionary on a new level in the early days of this century.

She reminds us revolutionaries of our task, to fight where life is, to be where the revolution calls us. She taught us the value of determination, devotion and bravery to our own lives. The Kurdish mothers and fathers who welcomed her in Rojava explained that although one Ivana had left, a thousand more Ivanas would come.

In our struggle  
Ivana lives on.

For us, Ivana Hoffman is exactly this: she is the call to create the generation of victory. Following the steps of 5,000 German volunteers in the fight against fascism in Spain, she is the call for us to defend the Rojava Revolution.

In Rojava a revolution has begun that brings all people together, a beacon for the people of the Middle East. Just like the revolution, Ivana brought many different parts of the world together - becoming a bridge between the masses. Everyone can see their struggle through her; be it the struggle of women, of gay LG-BTI+, of the racially oppressed, of the exploited working class.

Her life was memorialised in action with the foundation of the International Freedom Battalion, which she was working on building when she became a martyr. Since then, countless revolutionaries from every continent of the world have joined its ranks, taking up the rifle and the red flag from her hands.

She did not want to worry us or break security protocol - she left suddenly and without ceremony, without farewell parties or a final embrace. Instead she left a letter which has become known around the world. In it she wrote, "I want to be a guerilla full of compassion and hope."

When she died defending Christian villagers from the genocidal ISIS fascists, she had surpassed her aim, and transcended the prison of fear and mistrust that encircles our life under capitalism. She had become at once more than herself, and selfless. We must too.

*„PERHAPS I WILL MEET MY LIMITS AND FALL BEHIND, BUT I WILL NEVER GIVE UP MY SPIRIT TO FIGHT“*



# THE 'LAST- MINUTE' UNIVERSITY STUDENT IN THE PANDEMIC

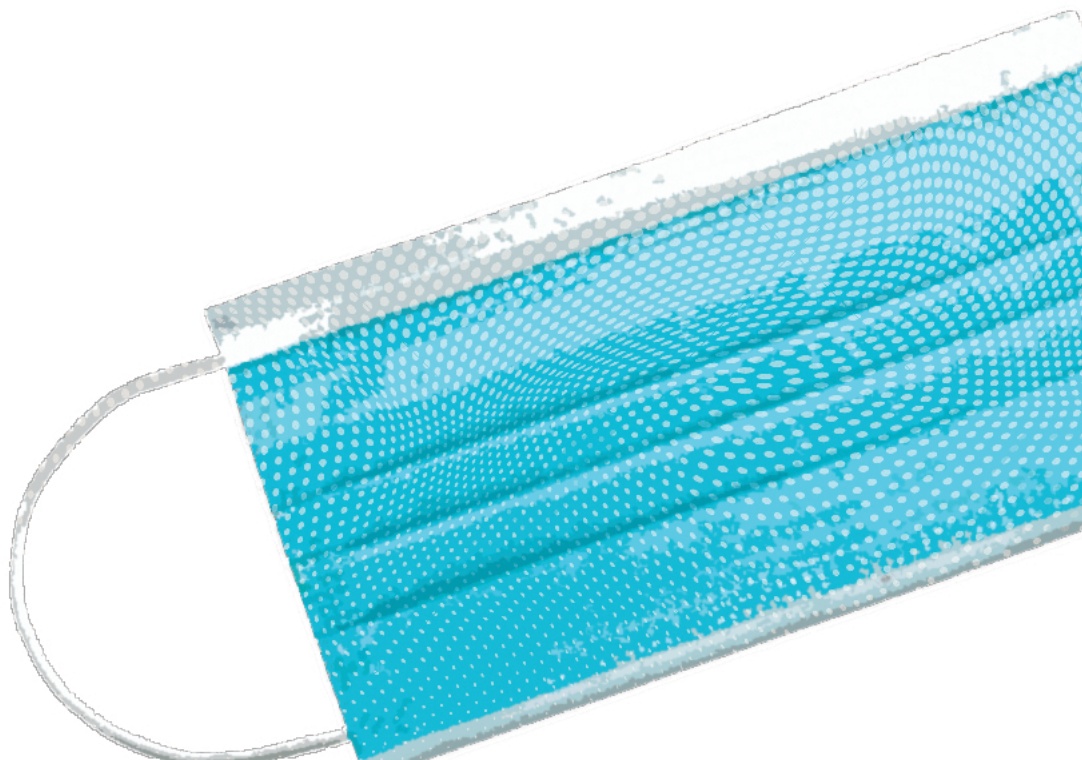
This academic year is anything but 'normal' or 'routine'. The ambiguity and lack of clarity surrounding how institutions would deal with the epidemic in regard to university students was never effectively addressed. I'd say us university students were kept on edge the entire time. Almost like we we're being excluded from the society.

The problem is when you're that 'last minute' student, things don't play easy for you, but this year was different. Anyways, we've supposedly made it through another academic year, so let's just take a deep breath and congratulate ourselves. Having to learn an entire course online initially sounded appealing; after all, those 9 a.m. lectures on a rainy dull day could be attended from the comfort of your own home.

But you know when exam season approach and deadlines pile up one after another, we all feel nervous and anxious right? This year, though, it went above and beyond! Mentally and physically, I found myself drained.

Unlike any other academic year, almost some, if not all of my revision notes were incomplete. Blameworthy or not, I realised that not having face to face lectures and





seminar were essentially not interactive enough. Although known to be a university student explicitly I didn't feel like it. For generations mental health has certainly been a major concern but the pandemic has exacerbated this problem.

I remember having a breakdown almost once every day! Looking back to 2018 when this pandemic never existed, being a student at a campus university was one of the best choices I had ever made! We were able to socialise without restrictions which morally encouraged and motivated us. However, since Covid – 19, we've all been too afraid to meet one another. I guess the feelings of loneliness have never been so real. Being secluded as a student and fearing for the health of another has definitely impacted our everyday behaviours.

Although, support was out there with university institutions the question is how effective was it really? No matter what, this wasn't easy for us university students one bit.

Oh, and I almost forgot to mention the most pressing issue that us university students face has to be tuition fees! Please correct me if I'm wrong, but for what exactly did I pay £9500 for? All of the petitions that were made on behalf of this issue were available to students, some of which had over 10,000 signatures, but were never heard in parliament. In addition to the teach-

which apparently are funded by this so-called tuition fees that we 'must' pay. Libraries and laboratories and more holistic services such as advice centres, were closed to comply with social distancing. As students we basically were not receiving the benefits of the university facilities regardless of the expectations, they had of us. To me once again it just doesn't add up! This is why in a capitalist society we struggle; things are just not equal, I suppose.

It is safe to say that the outbreak has hugely disrupted the education of university students. Many students especially those from disadvantage backgrounds have experienced difficulties accessing the online content that has been made available. The courses which have been delivered to us simply doesn't represent equal value for the money we have paid.

Considering, the practical challenges us students have faced during the pandemic like loss of income, having to pay for accommodations and unemployment is simply not fair. But anyways like I've said earlier on we've managed to cope with another academic year so let's just sit back, relax and most importantly breathe.

# FAINT HOPE AMIDST A BLOODY HARVEST



War in Afghanistan had been ongoing for over 40 years - until, after two decades of NATO occupation, the US admitted defeat and withdrew their troops. The Taliban wasted no time. Military bases, cities and strongholds fell like dominoes. Within just a few months, the government had fallen and the Taliban were in the presidential palace at Kabul, victorious.

US-backed President Ashraf Ghani announced on Facebook that he had fled the country. Remaining occupation forces, diplomats, contractors and collaborators mobbed Kabul airport, fearing retribution from the new regime. The order of the day was "save yourself, if you can". Barracks full of NATO gear, weapons technology, vehicles and drones were left to the Taliban in the exodus.

The Taliban were able to advance through the country at such lightning speed in part due to the weakness of the Ghani regime - but mainly because the foundations of their

power were never destroyed. For the US it was not particularly important whether bourgeois-democratic or political-Islamist fascist forces were in power in Afghanistan. First they supported the mujahideen, who later became the Taliban and al-Qaeda, against the Soviets; then they warred with them and occupied the country, and now they've made their peace. Because the central question was never what was best for Afghanistan, but what was best for the US; and who could be relied upon to protect and enable NATO interests.

This latest regime change has far-reaching consequences for the entire region. Despite competition and hostility between various Islamist groups such as ISIS-K, al-Qaeda and the Taliban, this victory has empowered them all. Jihadist gangs worldwide will see it as a vindication; rival imperialist powers as an opportunity for consolidation.

China has an interest in raw materials in the Afghan soil, and fears that an unstable relationship with the Taliban could cause

problems with Islamist groups in Xinjiang and other western provinces. Russia delights in the weakening of US supremacy and has their own imperialist interests in the region. Even Turkey wants a piece of the pie, broadcasting a Taliban statement which suggested they would be open to cooperation with Erdogan's fascist regime. The US and EU have recognised the Taliban as the sole power in Afghanistan and moved to establish diplomatic relations; once again operating over the heads of the Afghan people.

The impact of regime change for women and minorities in the country could be devastating. Women stand to lose what little progress they have gained - under the Taliban, they will likely not be able to return to school, to work, or even to walk the streets alone. Religious minorities such as the Shiite Hazara can expect violence and discrimination at best - at worst, full-scale ethnic cleansing and extinction.

But the end of US occupation also brings a faint ray of hope. In the Panjshir Valley, armed resis-





Taliban fighters take control of Afghan presidential palace after the Afghan President fled the country, in Kabul, Afghanistan, Sunday, Aug. 15, 2021

tance to the Taliban is holding out. In the cities, women who are not prepared to give up their lives have taken to the streets. For the first time in 20 years, the Afghan people have the opportunity to take control of their own fate.

## Our task

It is the duty of all internationalist youth to support the Afghan people in their struggle for justice and freedom. We must drive home the fact that the Taliban itself is a product of US foreign policy; that the blood is ultimately on imperialist hands; and that neither western-backed crooks like Ghani nor the Islamist fascists of the Taliban can serve the real interests of Afghanistan or any other country.

Solidarity with oppressed Afghans must include fighting to ensure that they are not simply left to the mercy of Taliban violence - that means preventing deportations and fighting for safe escape routes; it means


tearing down fortress Europe and its vicious guard dog Erdogan, and stopping the mass murder of refugees. It means demanding the rights of all refugees, not just occupation collaborators, to flee the new regime. The imperialists of NATO must be forced to reap the fruits of their own bloody harvest.


Our internationalist women's solidarity must shine brighter than ever; for if there is a force that can free Afghanistan and pave the way to peace, it is the women's revolution. Rojava is the living example of what's possible when women liberate themselves from fascism. Women will be the vanguard of the revolution and liberation of Afghanistan, as in the whole Middle East. The future is in their hands.


Afghanistan reminds us with cruel clarity that imperialism and occupation cannot bring justice or freedom anywhere, and Communists must fight for an end to all the foreign adventures of our capitalist states. Despite the horror of Taliban repressions, the end of the occupation is an opportunity for Afghans to fight for real democracy, and free their country and its peoples on their own terms.


In the Middle East and across the world, it is the united struggle of the oppressed which will turn the tide. There, as here, the people must win their own liberation.





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