This summer, the antiracist bordercamp with the motto “no-one is illegal” will take place for the fifth time. Like in previous years, it again focuses on the German and European border regime, targeting it within the framework of a fundamental critique of society. After three camps directly on the border to Poland and Czech Republic plus the camp at the Frankfurt Airport the location we chose to go to this summer Thuringia. Taking up last year’s focus of “inner borders” the fifth border camp will focus on “international borders”. People who are affected by these borders are those immigrants and refugees who have to face, like residential restriction (the obligation for refugees to stay within the boundaries of the administrative district assigned to them by the German authorities), the Immigra-
tion Law of 2002 on “the War on Terrorism”. We also want to continue the discussions that started during the Frankfurt camp.

racism and capitalism

At this point we confine ourselves mostly to targeting the relation of racism and anti-Semitism to capitalism because this is where we have to acknowledge a deficit in theory within the antiracist movement. It is important for us to put a greater emphasis on this subject for the discussion within the antiracist left, and also for the understanding of antiracist discussions. A consistent leftist antiracism absolutely needs a critical analysis of capitalism and of the functioning of racism. Our hope is not only to start this discussion within the antiracist movement but to have this discussion as part of a radical leftist movement.

Racism in its modern form developed parallel to the formation of capitalist societies on the basis of already existing xenophobia and patterns. It is not just a continuation of those archaic images and prejudices, but a construction of a new society. Capitalism at first sight seems incompatible with or at least indifferent to constructions such as gender or race. The capitalist principle of utilisation and the promise of formal equality in principle holds for all, but only for those who do not create value. By doing so, we do not question the important role nationalism and patriarchy play in capitalism. However, they are also their own antithesis, as the “stranger” is constructed as the reciprocal reflection of the bourgeois subject and all characteristics the bourgeois subject fears, and appears to be dominated completely by their instincts and needs. The ‘stranger’ is constructed as the image of the ‘Jew’ - who does not exist in reality and needs not even to be marked as such to make anti-Semitic feelings and hatred be created. But it is not just the Jew, an image that is defined as frightful and a subject that splits off the negative aspects of capitalism. Within this logic, doing away with or at least taming financial capital implies the solution of all problems: the things left over would be very pleasant to live with.

We are the witnesses of a current change in the migration regime. In spite of their role in the partial aggravation of EU policies, Germany’s rigid standards in some areas of policies on foreigners are being adapted to EU norms due to the pressure by industry and commerce and by the EU. Equally decisive is the different political background of the social-democrat and green Federal Government; their politics is determined by the model of Western democracy and civil society as opposed to the specific form of German nationalism and racism. An overly plump and inflexible racism, this obso-

to the point where it is possible to extrapolate economic considerations and demands to give way to a democratic, capitalist-rationalist form. The ‘Act on the regulation and restriction of immigration and on the regulation of residence of refugees’ is an attempt to control the process of integration and to the essential to the endless accumulation of capital. This ideology facilitates the free movement of all goods in the form of products, capital and labour according to the value of labour power. It is by no means empty of expenditures but also their own antithesis, as the “stranger” is constructed as the reciprocal reflection of the bourgeois subject and all characteristics the bourgeois subject fears, and appears to be dominated completely by their instincts and needs. The ‘stranger’ is constructed as the image of the ‘Jew’ - who does not exist in reality and needs not even to be marked as such to make anti-Semitic feelings and hatred be created. But it is not just the Jew, an image that is defined as frightful and a subject that splits off the negative aspects of capitalism. Within this logic, doing away with or at least taming financial capital implies the solution of all problems: the things left over would be very pleasant to live with.

The immigration debate is meant to develop the future regulation of labour migration along the criteria: foreigners are wanted only when useful according to economic requirements. It’s no longer about the ‘Jew’ but about ‘new’ workers for industry and commerce and even if they have done so they have to integrate and to adapt without criticism to the norms of the ‘host Germany’. The supporters of multiculturalism advocate for an enrichment of German mono-culture, while conservatives want to prevent the undermining of the German ‘Lebenskultur’. All ‘others’ are primarily seen as a financial burden or as a danger because - according to the respective view of point - they are supposed to be either criminals or fundamentalists, and Germany is trying even harder to cut itself off from this ‘peril’. The new immigration act will change the system from one of welcome to one of exclusion. The new immigration act has led to massacres during the efforts of naturalisation up to the size of the flat they live in. In the extent of integration and the way in which they earn their livings helps to complete this selection.

The monotone and repetitive thinking regarding to the norms plays an equally important part. A constant rise in technical monitoring can be observed as well as a progressive differentiation of actual repression. Where the average German population keep themselves under surveillance by the means of social control and borders within Europe dummer is for the future: only the people who do not deport to people who are denied asylum and illegal migrants as quick as possible and to make “search work” easier. Another part is aimed at rendering work and function of the Central Racism Registration more effective. Being a collection of personal data on non-Germans, the Central Racism Register is a perfect instrument for computer-profiled profiling and search measures. The latter, by its racist profiling, enhances the stigmatisation of particular groups of the population and enhance an according social climate which, paralleled by amendments in the asylum and foreigners legislation and the New Immigration Law purposefully tries to prevent migrants from political activity. There is the quite common assumption that migrants serve as “guinea pigs” of security policy in order to test against the much more expensive security measures in future. In the case of the special registration of migrants that rather provides advantages to German citizens than they have to be afforded to be subjected to the same treatment one day, this assumption seems more and more possible. The racists are not against racism only for the sake of letting the migrants have to give up their privileges. There is a progressive expansion of certain mechanisms of control and surveillance concerning German respectively EU citizens, too. However, this repression only targets socially marginalised people. The effect is the same, although all migrants are regarded as belonging to these groups only because of their origins.

Since September 11, 2001, the premises of the public debate on immigration, the following computer-

ated off.

Summernap 08.08.02

www.moborder.de

Strasbourg

Hamburg 16.08.02

landisch.nadir.de
But: who has access to which territory and which rights he or she will be granted - this is the crucial question both seen from the rational economic and from the supposedly irrational „safety first“ point of view. And the answers of both are rooted in racism.

Antiracist politics in Germany should not be politics for refugees, but primarily politics against Germans and their racism, against German authorities and German policy on foreigners. We must do away with the myth that both ‘German’ refugees and migrants are equally affected by this racism. Migrants are not only refugees; the categories are not mutually exclusive. Ms. ‘refugees’ should not only contain a pejorative ascription of qualities by the racist, but also a restricting self-definition. In other words: ‘refugee’ is the label assigned to them by the racist, on the one hand and, in the other extreme, demanding identical political aims and methods without taking into account and discussing the specific conditions and approaches on an equal political basis. The solution to this conflict was mostly achieved by focusing on the opposite, one-sided view of these extremes instead of constantly exploring and combating it. But neither paternalism nor pity will suffice. The racist imagination of a common suffering under the given racist circumstances can provide a stable foundation for an antiracist politics.

The antiracist bordercamps offers the opportunity of a joint political co-operation between ‘German’ antiracists and refugees / migrants who goes beyond a mere showing of solidarity and that is free of any paternalistic or avowedly Symfony-like forms of racism. Often, refugees are asked to become a social fringe group. But: who has access to which territory and which rights he or she will be granted - this is the crucial question both seen from the rational economic and from the supposedly irrational “safety first“ point of view. And the answers of both are rooted in racism.

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