



200th Birthday of Friedrich Engels in his birthplace in Germany:

300 people honor Engels as a revolutionary despite police brutality

Translation provided by the LF – Left Forum

The 200th birthday of Friedrich Engels, the co-founder of scientific socialism and co-author of the Communist Manifesto, was celebrated yesterday by approx. 300 people of all age groups, independent individuals and from various organizations, with the „Engels March“ that we organized in his place of birth, today Wuppertal- Barmen. This is a great success, especially under pandemic conditions. It shows that Engels' work, regardless of any attempt at appropriation and distortion by the city of Wuppertal and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, stands firmly for itself and is of increasing importance for people today. We would like to thank the participants for this lively and militant tribute to the great revolutionary and internationalist from Barmen, Friedrich Engels!

We have been organizing events to honor Friedrich Engels since 2015, without any incidents worth mentioning. This was different for Engels' 200th birthday: at the beginning of the demonstration, the police were extremely arbitrary and aggressive. It provoked the rally participants, held the demonstration, which was too large, together in an area that was too small in front of the train station in Barmen, against the request of the meeting management, and delayed the departure. Warnings because of a violation of the ban on masking (*in Germany, protestors must not hide their identity, parallel to the current mask mandate*) were threatened to be issued even against children (we are not talking about adolescents) who wore hoods at around 41 °F. The police continued to threaten to break up the demonstration. Meanwhile, there was an attack on our participants, during which the police brutally entered the demonstration and immediately used batons. However, the demonstrators showed themselves to be highly disciplined and rejected the attack by the police. In the course of the demonstration through the city center and the interim rally in front of the town hall in Barmen, the police clearly held back, but then increased their presence at the final rally in the Engels Garden without cause and lined up in rows around the location at several points.

In the course of the demonstration, the police set up a threat scenario for the rally. Nevertheless, the police failed with their provocations and attempts to criminalize the march and its participants. It did not succeed in preventing Friedrich Engels from being recognized and honored as a revolutionary and communist.

We protest against the actions of the police and demand an explanation for this action from the city of Wuppertal and the police.