

Dear people of Belarus,

Ladies and gentlemen on the streets of Minsk,

if we may believe the pictures and reports of the German television, you have been in resistance against the officially re-elected president Alexander Lukashenko for a week. Demonstrations, strikes and cruel police violence against opposition members are apparently taking place everywhere. Referring to the opposition, newspapers in Germany report that the elections in your country were neither free nor fair. The official election results are therefore grossly falsified, the overwhelming majority of Belarusians are in favor of the opposition candidate and the "last dictatorship of Europe" is about to fall. The EU and the USA are supporting you selflessly in this.

We cannot verify or judge these statements. Is it the truth? Or is this a gross exaggeration to "crack" Russia's last strategic ally in Eastern Europe and extend NATO further east? Keyword: Kaliningrad and "suwalki gap". We do not know.

We also do not know what to think about US troop transfers to the western border of your country. One thing is certain: many people in Belarus are dissatisfied with the President's policy. Why you are dissatisfied is something our media hardly or far too little tells us. The reason for your dissatisfaction is apparently of no interest at all as long as the rage of the street is directed only against Lukashenko and "the system". For you, dear citizens of Belarus, this could be a first indication of how politically calculating the EU is in supporting your "freedom fight" and how little it is about your interests, about your dissatisfaction in times of crisis.

What you can expect after a more or less "peaceful revolution" in Belarus, you can certainly study in detail in almost all other countries of Eastern Europe. Let us inform you about the liquidation of state enterprises, mass dismissals, the collapse of collective farms and agricultural enterprises, mass exodus from the countryside, and the dying villages in Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Poland ... Compare the collapse of social infrastructure, day-care centers, hospitals, old people's homes, and the consequences for life expectancy, alcoholism, and deprivation ...

In return you will certainly get new oligarchs in the new freedom, who will compete for power with their own television stations, publishing houses and parties. Every four years you can elect a different one. As is well known, this does not change anything. Incidentally, the academic elite is leaving their home countries and their families to do a lot of work in Germany or Great Britain in hospitals, industry or the IT sector. The rest of the population can compete with migrant workers from Poland, Ukraine, or Moldova to see who is exploited and made sick as an asparagus picker or butcher, cleaner, and prostitute in German factories and brothels. You can also find out how Eastern European migrants living in Western Europe, how they are treated when they lose their jobs and homes, and what those Germans who show just so much sympathy for your struggle for freedom think of you.

And finally, a word about free elections. Unfortunately, we know all about that: In the exemplary democracies of Western Europe, the following things are regarded as "without alternatives" and are not up for election: the ownership relationships with billionaires and beggars, unemployment, work that makes people ill and depressive, poverty and the exploitation of Eastern European migrant workers, deportations and so on.

By the way: Whether or not you can be among these happy migrant workers in the future is not decided by free elections in Minsk, but by Berlin and Brussels laws on the free movement of workers and the not at all freely elected personnel managers of Western companies. It is not your needs and worries that are the focus of attention, but the needs of large capitals for cheap and willing workers. Incidentally, in times of crisis, this demand should be covered in the foreseeable future ...

We believe you are striving for a better life and we find it understandable. However, it is doubtful that these free elections will be of any use to you. One thing is certain: the freedom for which you are currently fighting will not be your freedom. Because in western democracies, you can by no means choose whether to keep your job or lose it, whether there is another crisis or an economic upturn, how much money you earn from your work, how much rents are rising, and so on. All this is dictated, as we all know, by "the market" or the competition between companies, banks, and speculators.

In free elections based on the Western model, you also cannot decide whether you would rather retire at 63 or 67 and whether you can live on this pension at all. You cannot even vote on whether or not you want a new war with Russia. All this is decided by freely elected politicians "without alternative" for their people.

Therefore do not demand free elections according to the Western model. Do not follow pro-Western opposition candidates. Do not let yourself be pulled in front of the NATO carts! Do not let freely elected politicians and capitalist corporations dictate your living conditions! They will not improve. Do not conquer seats of parliament and presidential palaces. If you want to escape the fate of wage earners in other countries of Eastern Europe - conquer the democratic control of the working classes over the economic and social living conditions in your country. Form councils!

With best regards,

Opposition members from the Ruhr Area (signed Armin Fischer)