

German media demand a NATO war against Russia

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Leading German journalists, who have been agitating for weeks for a war against Russia, intensified their propaganda after Tuesday's announcement that NATO was stepping up its intervention in Eastern Europe. Even after the experiences of the First and Second World Wars, some clearly can't wait for a re-run of the Eastern Front.

In the lead editorial of Wednesday's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), entitled "Flying the flag", Berthold Kohler expresses delight that NATO has finally awakened from its "hibernation" and is flying "the flag on its eastern edge". In his view, the massive military presence of NATO in Eastern Europe, announced by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Brussels on Tuesday, supported by Germany with at least one battleship and six fighter aircraft, is not nearly enough.

Kohler declares: "the deployment of a few aircraft, ships and soldiers ... [was] the very least ... the Alliance must do to remain credible at home and abroad. Less than that would be seen by the Kremlin as a sign of weakness and indecision, because of which it already despises the West."

Kohler then allows his war fantasies against Russia to run wild. Set on full war mode, he complains that NATO currently wanted to do no more than "not provide Moscow with a pretext to cancel the tediously agreed talks."

It is clear that the planned four-way talks between the US, the EU, the pro-Western government in Kiev and Russia alluded to by Kohler are only the background music for the intensification of Western aggression against Russia. Nevertheless, they are a thorn in the eye for Kohler. He does not want dialogue, but war! Venomously, he complains, "Not only the EU but also NATO prefers talking a thousand times, than shooting

once."

Such blatant calls for a war by the EU and NATO against Russia are now almost *de rigueur* in the out of control bourgeois editorial offices. Also on Thursday, the editor of *Die Zeit*, Joseph Joffe, who for weeks has been agitating against Russia, sings the same tune in his op-ed piece "The war of the little green men."

First, Joffe tries to portray the protests in eastern Ukraine as a criminal conspiracy funded by Russia. He writes, "The Ukrainians call them the 'little green men'. They are the leadership and the advance guard in eastern Ukraine, just as in March in Crimea. They do not come from Mars, but from Russia ... At the weekend, the *Wall Street Journal* reports from Kiev, they began to organize local followers (the paper speaks of 'criminal gangs'). For a signing bonus equivalent to 40 to 500 dollars, it says, they have attacked police stations and government buildings."

Joffe provides no proof for his allegations. Everything he writes is propaganda. In reality, the resistance in eastern Ukraine is not a Russian conspiracy, but a reaction by the majority of the Russian-speaking population to the putsch regime in Kiev supported by the West and imposed by fascists. As if to underline which political and social interests he articulates when he scribbles his lies and calls for violence and war with the keyboard of his laptop, Joffe cites his source as the *Wall Street Journal* —the mouthpiece of international finance capital.

With satisfaction, he notes that the Ukrainian government, "in contrast to Crimea", was ready to "fight" this time. On Tuesday, "the first shots [were] fired" when "soldiers drove an armed mob from a Ukrainian base". Even the Obama administration was now showing "somewhat sharper teeth" and talked about "a 'menu' of retribution". On "the menu" stood

“tougher economic sanctions”, “the deployment of a ‘small’ American troop contingent to eastern NATO member countries” and “the mobilization of larger units in the event that Moscow openly intervenes”.

But for Joffe all this is not nearly enough! “Above all, caution reigns,” he complains. “Military movements would have to be approved by the NATO Alliance,” and considering “wavering EU capitals” this was “not guaranteed”. The aim of the “troop deployment” was not “to deter the Russians, but to strengthen the trust of Eastern NATO members.” Also, America did not want to “supply Ukraine with ‘lethal’ equipment”; the Ukrainian army was receiving “only field rations”.

Joffe’s conclusion: The US would indeed “show determination, but not take risks.” Everything was a “test of will”, but “not a test of strength”. The Americans did not want to describe “a bigger hammer”, “let alone swing it themselves.”

Writers such as Joffe and Kohler should be subjects for prosecution by the state attorney. If the standards of the German constitution, the Penal Code or even the Nuremberg war crimes trials were applied to their fascist views to “shoot” at last, or to “swing the hammer”, they would be sentenced in court.

Article 26 of the German Constitution states that “Acts tending to and undertaken with intent to disturb the peaceful relations between nations, especially to prepare for a war of aggression, shall be unconstitutional. They shall be made a criminal offence”. Paragraph 80a of the Penal Code states that whoever “publicly incites to a war of aggression in a meeting or through the dissemination of written materials within the Federal Republic of Germany shall be liable to imprisonment from three months to five years.” In the Nuremberg war crimes trials, one of the main charges was of committing “crimes against peace.”

The fact that leading German daily and weekly newspapers violate these elementary principles, which Germany imposed after the heinous crimes of the Second World War and no one in politics and the media protests, is a warning to the working class. Exactly one hundred years after the outbreak of World War I, the same ruling elite that unleashed two world wars and committed heinous crimes has again discovered the positive sides of war.

One example of this is an article by the editor of *Die*

Welt, Ulrich Schmid, who writes of the First World War: “This war, which divided the peoples and posed them against each other in the literal sense, was also an experience that united the people of Europe. As cynical as it may sound, this war created, with martial violence, a common European horizon. In the trenches, the soldiers on both sides of the barbed wire made the same experiences.”

The Partei für Soziale Gleichheit (PSG, Socialist Equality Party) will not let a criminal ruling class again transform Europe into an imperialist slaughter house because it will not begrudge millions of workers the common experience of being torn apart by bombs! We are standing in the European elections in order to “make it a plebiscite against the warmongers and their accomplices in the media”, and to build an international anti-war movement that links the resistance to war with the struggle for socialist revolution. Study and disseminate our election manifesto and join in this struggle. It is high time to stop the warmongers!



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