

German intelligence agencies criticise government's refugee policy

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The *Welt am Sonntag* published an article at the weekend headlined “Security officials impatiently waiting for Merkel’s ‘go-ahead’.” The authors report major opposition to the refugee policy of German Chancellor Angela Merkel within the intelligence agencies and security authorities.

“Concern is growing daily over the loss of control and the lack of a plan for mass immigration, above all in the domestic intelligence agency, federal criminal office, foreign intelligence agency (BND) and federal police,” the article states. A senior security official who did not want to reveal his name, “for fear of reprisals”, was cited as saying: “The large influx of people from other parts of the world will lead to instability in our country.”

The official accused Merkel’s “policy of open borders” of leading to the uncontrolled immigration of extremists. This would result in a radicalisation of citizens in the centre ground “because they do not want this mass migration and it is being imposed on them by the political elite.”

The article then cited an “unsigned paper” which was drafted by high-ranking security personnel. It states that the migration of “hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants to Germany” was not possible given the already existing parallel societies. Instead, “we are importing Islamic extremism, Arab anti-Semitism, national and ethnic conflicts of other peoples, as well as another notion of law and society.”

The anonymous paper attacked the German government sharply and asserted that the warnings from the security agencies about uncontrolled migration were being tossed aside by unconcerned politicians. The government was hindering the security agencies from carrying out their work, which they are obliged to undertake by law.

They go so far as to accuse the government of acting in violation of the law. After the declaration that border agencies are obliged to deport illegal immigrants, the paper goes on to warn, “Contradictory instructions are in violation of the law and lead to criminal offences ... incitement or repeatedly assisting illegal entry of foreign nationals (importation of foreigners).”

The article then cites former interior secretary and BND head August Hanning. The 69-year-old, “still today a well-connected security expert in Germany and around the world”, presented a 10-point programme within the past week in which he demands that the German government return to acting within the law in the “current migrant crisis”.

The security agencies’ programme, which has been worked out with “active and retired security experts”, reads like an order to the government. It contains the following demands, among others: a halt to accepting refugees and a statement from the Chancellor that Germany’s capacity to take in immigrants has been reached; an order to the federal police to immediately close the borders for all immigrants without authorisation to travel into Germany and the decisive and uncompromising deportation of all immigrants without travel authorisation; the immediate “freezing” of the flood of migrants currently in the Balkans; restriction of family reunification in Germany; imposition of residency obligation on immigrants with consequent cuts to social welfare if this is breached; and immediate strengthening of the security authorities.

The security agencies’ attacks on the government and chancellor are directed at the democratic structures of society. It demonstrates that the security agencies consider themselves to be increasingly independent. Although composed of agencies obliged to follow orders, they are acting independently like a state within

a state.

This development has emerged over a long period. It is directly connected with the revival of German great power politics, which was announced by President Joachim Gauck and the German government two years ago. At that time, they called for an end to Germany's military restraint and stronger German engagement in the world's crisis regions.

The government paper "New power—New responsibility", which prepared this shift, also contains a long section on the "domestic dimension of German foreign policy". It deals with issues such as how the "problem of domestic legitimacy" and opposition by a "sceptical public" could be overcome; in other words, how resistance to militarism and war could be suppressed.

The intelligence agencies and security services play an important role in this respect. In the Weimar Republic, they acted with virtual independence and contributed considerably to its collapse. They had close connections to the leadership of the German army, who also refused to subordinate themselves to civilian control, as well as links to right-wing terrorist organisations.

The notorious Organisation Consul (O.C.) was a secret right-wing terrorist organisation with close ties to the German army and intelligence agencies that destabilised the Weimar Republic through political murders and terrorist attacks. One of their most well-known victims was Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau.

Friedrich Wilhelm Heinz, a leading member of Organisation Consul, formed a new secret association after the Second World War. FWHD, the service named after him, worked closely with the Conservative government of Konrad Adenauer and was integrated into the BND in the early 1950s.

Hanning, who formulated the 10-point programme, was a key figure within Germany's security agencies. Before he took over as head of the BND in 1998, he was active from 1986 to 1990 as the official responsible for intelligence in the Federal Republic's permanent office in East Germany and in this role was involved in the freeing of prisoners from the GDR.

He then led the move of the BND from Pullach near Munich to Berlin, expanding the agency into a mammoth institution in the heart of Berlin with close

contacts to the government.

Hanning vehemently defended the intelligence agencies as new information came to light about their close ties to the extreme right. It is now known that at least 25 intelligence operatives were active around the National Socialist Underground (NSU), which for more than six years murdered nine immigrants and a police officer, allegedly without being noticed.

When Hanning was questioned in 2012 by the investigative committee of the German parliament about the involvement of the security agencies, the destruction of files and the blocking of the investigation, he provocatively answered, "If it was nine dead policemen there would be no investigation."

The committee's chairman, Sebastian Edathy, responded angrily and called Hanning to order. Little more than a year later, the state prosecutor in Hannover searched Edathy's apartment in the presence of journalists based on the accusation he had purchased child pornography. This ruined the SPD politician politically and personally. Later, the investigation was halted without a judgement being passed.

The close connections between the intelligence agencies and right-wing terrorists, the blocking and suppression of the investigation into these criminal activities and the latest attack by the security apparatus on the German government send a warning signal that must be taken very seriously.



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