

German Left Party leader polemicises against refugees

Calls for more police, signals support for NATO war policy

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The Left Party has reacted to the heinous massacre in Munich and the terror attack in Ansbach with a further shift to the right. In a manner similar to that of the conservative Christian Social Union (CSU) in Bavaria, leaders of the Left Party are attacking the German government from the right and calling for a tightening up of precisely the policy that has led to the recent violence. They are polemicising against refugees, calling for more police and signalling their support for the war policy pursued by NATO.

On Monday, Left Party co-chair Sahra Wagenknecht issued a press release in which she rounded on refugees and immigrants and attacked the refugee policy of Chancellor Angela Merkel, pleading instead for a “law and order”-type state able to intervene aggressively.

“The events of the last days show that the reception and integration of large numbers of refugees and immigrants is bound up with considerable problems and is more difficult than Merkel’s frivolous “we can do it” appeal from last fall,” Wagenknecht stated. She added that the state must “know who is in the country and, if possible, where there is potential danger.” The government “now has a special responsibility to maintain people’s confidence in the capabilities of the state and its security agencies, she said.

In a summer interview with the German ZDF television station, Wagenknecht declared last Sunday that she backed the massive police operation conducted in Munich and called for a further build-up of the country’s security forces: “In Munich we saw the importance of a well-trained and well-equipped police. There can be no total protection but the [police] on the scene responded well.”

Wagenknecht even managed to criticise from the

right German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere, who had systematically promoted the build-up of state forces. “Every politician is obliged to support a policy that establishes broad security. Last week Mr. de Maiziere stumbled around publicly promoting the idea of local deputies in order to mask the reduction of police personnel. I hope now that this idea is really off the table.”

For its part, the Left Party had always called for “even more [and] better equipped police. ... We thought it wrong that in some cases police jobs were cut in states due to the restrictions of the debt limit.”

Wagenknecht’s embrace of the police goes hand in hand with her embrace of the war policy pursued by the German government. When asked about her earlier demand for a withdrawal of Germany from NATO, she said succinctly, “Of course, Germany would not quit NATO on the same day we join a government.”

In other words, the Left Party is quite prepared to support German war policy as a coalition partner in a possible red-red-green (SPD-Left Party-Green) government in 2017!

In an interview published about the same time in *Der Spiegel*, Bodo Ramelow, the first Left Party premier (in the state of Thuringia) declared: “We are not pacifists.” He considered it “false” for the Left Party not to vote by a majority for Bundeswehr missions abroad in future. After all, Wagenknecht’s predecessor Left Party leader, Gregor Gysi, “had raised a crucial question years ago: How should the Left respond to UN mandated missions? Can we really say: Never Again?”

Both Wagenknecht and Ramelow are well known for publicly promoting the right-wing bourgeois politics of their party. “We take responsibility. We have mayors

and district administrators. We are part of the system of organisation,” Ramelow has boasted.

Ramelow even enjoys good relations with the arch-conservative Bavarian prime minister, Horst Seehofer (CSU). “Sure, why not? We have a common border, we have common power lines and many other issues we work out together. And that’s why I go to him and say: Listen Horst, we’ve got a few things to clear up.” Especially on concrete issues there are often “absolutely no differences” between him and Seehofer, Ramelow said.

Under conditions of increasing domestic class tensions and the revival of an aggressive foreign policy, all of the German parties are closing ranks and moving further to the right. On Tuesday, Seehofer and Bavarian Interior Minister Joachim Hermann held a press conference at which, according to *Spiegel Online*, they demanded, “in response to recent events more police, more controls and a more stringent treatment of refugees and asylum seekers.”

Wagenknecht and Ramelow could have undoubtedly stood shoulder to shoulder with Seehofer and Hermann based on the premise of “absolutely no differences” between them.



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