

Stop the German government's preparations for war!

Socialist Equality Party of Germany
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Many have responded with a mixture of surprise, shock and horror to the “Civil Defence Concept” (KZV) officially presented by German Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière on Wednesday. Extending over 69 pages, it details a series of measures to prepare the population for a war.

“One must pause for breath after reading these 69 pages,” wrote the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* on Monday in a preliminary report on the document, noting that it dealt with issues one would rather suppress.

“How to be protected against attacks using biological or chemical weapons? How will the population be taken to safety if a radioactive cloud spreads? Where will the federal government hide if an attack is threatened? Where will cultural treasures be stored in the case of war? How can men and women be made to report for work in ‘sectors vital to life and defence?’” These questions had to be asked, the newspaper stated, because it was necessary to “prepare for the worst.”

The “Civil Defence Concept” appeared in parallel with the “White Paper 2016 on Security Policy and the Future of the German Army,” which proposed a major strengthening of the military. Whoever thought this meant only an expansion of military deployments abroad can now clearly see that the German government is preparing for wars that will transform Germany and Europe into a battlefield—and within the foreseeable future.

The “Civil Defence Concept” calls on the population to establish a personal store of water and food to last ten days. It recommends that a first aid kit, warm blankets, coal, wood, candles, torches, batteries, matches, charged batteries and cash reserves be kept at the ready.

Further measures to prepare for a “state of defence” include the “strengthening of building materials” for public and private buildings; the establishment of a “dependable alarm system” via radio, TV, sirens, loudspeakers, text messages and the Internet; and the

creation of hospital “decontamination stations” in case of nuclear, biological or chemical attack.

The document declares it necessary to consider the reintroduction of compulsory military service and the implementation of a secure method for the call-up and mobilization of military personnel. It argues that the Federal Labour Agency should have the power to compel men and women to work in “sectors vital to life and defence.”

These measures are not about Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union “electioneering” or an attempt to “spread panic,” as the Greens and the Left Party claim. Nor is the “Civil Defence Concept” a mere redrafting of routine instructions for disaster situations, as some media outlets have argued in an attempt to downplay its significance. On the contrary, the document makes explicit and repeated references to war and chemical and nuclear weapons attacks.

Twenty-five years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a nuclear war on European soil is a real danger. NATO has systematically encircled and threatened Russia militarily. The Western alliance is openly preparing for war. Last July, *Der Spiegel* cited Danish NATO officer Jacob Larsen as saying, “We have to learn once again how to fight a total war.”

German imperialism, which has already on two occasions plunged the world into the abyss, is playing a central role in this. Since the German government announced the “end of military restraint” at the beginning of 2014, German foreign policy has been following an aggressive path similar to that which preceded World War I and World War II.

Together with Washington, Berlin played the leading role in the coup that overthrew the elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in early 2014 and replaced him with a regime led by pro-Western oligarch Petro Poroshenko and based directly on fascist groups and

militias. Since then, NATO has been building up its military forces on Russia's borders, working closely with the ultranationalist, anti-Russian governments in Poland, the Baltic states and Ukraine.

Earlier this summer, the largest ever NATO exercise took place in Eastern Europe. Operation Anaconda, which included 31,000 soldiers, 3,000 vehicles, 105 aircraft and 12 ships, simulated a war with Russia. A month later, the NATO summit in Warsaw agreed to station several battalions and create a missile defence system in Romania and the Baltic states.

The military situation is now so tense that an incident, intended or not, could trigger an uncontrollable chain reaction.

Factions within the US ruling elite pushing for a military confrontation with Russia are gaining strength. The hawks are for the most part not in the camp of the semi-fascist Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, but lined up behind the Democrat Hillary Clinton, who is also backed by Germany's ruling elite.

The agitation against Russia is assuming hysterical dimensions in Germany. Even Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who prepared the way for the return of German militarism and played a leading role in the Ukraine coup, is too soft for most of the media.

Last week, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* accused him of viewing "the motives of Moscow fundamentally differently" than German Chancellor Angela Merkel. "While Merkel allowed Moscow's actions to be termed cynical, Steinmeier travelled to Ekaterinburg to dream in a speech," the newspaper wrote. It went on to accuse Steinmeier of turning towards "those for whom an understanding for Russia and a hearty distrust of America are always two sides of the same coin."

The two most important German foreign policy think tanks, the German Society for Foreign Policy (DGAP) and the Foundation of Political Science (SWP), produce a steady flow of papers accusing Russia of aggression, violations of international law and the destabilisation of Europe.

A DGAP paper authored by Jana Puglierin from the Green Party-aligned Heinrich Böll Foundation concluded with the demand that NATO "demonstrate its decisiveness" towards Russia and "operate from a position of strength." This means, it explained, "the limiting of confrontation by 'containment'" and a turn to military means by a "strengthened NATO that can credibly deter Russia," along with the "maintenance of the economic and political sanctions."

The confrontation with Russia is not the only source of conflict threatening war. In the Syrian war, where the front lines are increasingly difficult to identify, the US and its allies are preparing a military escalation that could expand into a confrontation with Russia, a nuclear power. Germany is also on the front lines here. The same applies to the imperialist wars in other parts of the Middle East and Africa.

With the crisis of the European Union, national antagonisms are breaking out once again in Europe. While Germany arrogantly claims to be the "hegemon" and "leading power" in the EU, other European powers are rearming and stoking up nationalism.

There is no opposition among the establishment parties to the government's war drive. On the contrary, both opposition parties in the Bundestag, the Left Party and the Greens, are inciting it further.

The Left Party parliamentary group chairwoman, Sahra Wagenknecht, accused the government Tuesday of giving backing to the "terror potentate Erdogan," the Turkish president who has been threatened with exclusion from the US-led coalition in Syria, and supporting his "unspeakable policies." The foreign affairs spokesperson for the Green parliamentary group, Omid Nouripour, accused the government of a thoughtless foreign policy. "It weakens Germany's influence and reduces our room for manoeuvre if the federal government does not speak with one voice," he declared.

The Partei für Soziale Gleichheit (Socialist Equality Party) is the only party warning of the war danger and mobilising workers and young people against it. The PSG has placed the struggle against war at the heart of its election campaign in the Berlin state elections and clearly identified the cause of the war danger—the global crisis of capitalism.

"The German ruling elite do not intend to emerge empty-handed from the new redivision of the world and the struggle for raw materials and markets," the PSG wrote in its election manifesto. The election statement further declared that a "new anti-war movement can be successful only if it is international, is based on the working class, and combines the fight against war with the struggle against capitalism."



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