

# Right-wing campaign after anti-terror operation in Germany

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German Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière ordered the arrest of three terrorist suspects on Tuesday morning in a major police operation in the state of Schleswig-Holstein. More than 200 officers from the Federal Criminal Agency (BKA), the federal police and police from several states participated in raids on three refugee accommodation centres and a number of apartments.

The special forces unit GSG9 arrested three men, aged 17, 18 and 26, all of whom turned out to be Syrians, in Ahrensburg and Großhansdorf, east of Hamburg, and in Reinfeld near Lübeck. The authorities allegedly secured thousands of dollars, false passports and mobile telephones from the suspects. The accused are now in investigative detention.

The operation was immediately exploited by politicians and the media to encourage xenophobic sentiments and to campaign for a strong state.

De Maizière declared to the media, “According to what is known so far, information from the BKA suggests the perpetrators had connections to the Paris attackers.” There was the “suspicion that the detainees came to Germany on behalf of Islamic State.” Their passports were produced in the same workshop of a smuggling organisation that produced those for the Paris attackers, who killed 130 people last November. The three allegedly passed themselves off as refugees in November 2015 to travel through Greece and the Balkan route to Germany.

Although de Maizière added the obligatory sentence that one could not place all refugees under suspicion, this is merely a cynical cover for his right-wing rhetoric. He immediately added that there were “refugees who sympathise with terrorism.”

Bavaria’s interior minister Joachim Hermann (Christian Social Union) spoke out and demanded

“strict border controls and clear identification of those who come to us in this country.” Hermann claimed, “The obvious gaps in control of the immense influx of refugees, above all last autumn, has had dire consequences.” ISIS was exploiting “the security gaps deliberately” to “smuggle attackers to Europe concealed as refugees.”

The ruling class is using the same propaganda methods that dominated the media in the wake of the New Year’s Eve events in Cologne. While at the beginning of the year, they associated foreigners and refugees with “criminals” and “rapists,” they are now trying to stigmatise refugees as terrorists. This campaign plays directly into the hands of the right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD), which commented confidently on its web site, “Once again, the warnings of the AfD Schleswig-Holstein have been confirmed by reality.” Chancellor Merkel had “opened the borders of the federal republic and has left our country in a virtually defenceless state.”

The same message was taken up by the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in an article by Reinhard Müller, headlined, “The consequences of openness without limits.” Müller asserted that there was a “high abstract risk from fundamentalist attackers,” and called on the federal government to speak out clearly about “what the result of openness without limits is.” The “opening of the borders” remained a “big experiment with literally many unknowns.” His solution was a stronger state: “In the Middle East, in the core area of the Islamist terror organisation, Germany’s influence is limited. But hopefully not here at home,” according to Müller.

The jurist Reinhard Müller was among those journalists calling last year for a military intervention in Syria. In a piece titled “Need of the hour” he called not

only for an intervention in Syria, but also for the deployment of the German army domestically.

The limited information surrounding the anti-terror intervention in Schleswig-Holstein leaves open many questions. As the interior minister himself had to admit, there was, “according to the current stage of the investigation,” no “evidence of concrete plans for an attack.” At no point had any risks been associated with the people involved. The domestic intelligence agency had been spying on the men for nine months. According to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, a foreign intelligence agency cracked their coded chat messages with ISIS.

Why would such a suspected “terrorist group” be taken out in a major police operation now? The timing of the operation has clearly been guided by political motives. Days before the Berlin election, in which the CDU has led the way with a law-and-order campaign, the federal government wants to create an hysterical atmosphere and demonstrate the strength of the state.

Several government representatives and politicians praised the actions of the security forces. They were “alert and acted decisively,” according to de Maizière. Federal justice minister Heiko Mas (Social Democratic Party, SPD) declared that the arrests showed “that our authorities act decisively against suspected terrorists.” And the interior minister of Schleswig-Holstein, Stefan Studt (SPD), praised the cooperation between federal and state police officers.

The true circumstances and background surrounding the “anti-terror operation” in Schleswig-Holstein remain unclear for now. But all politicians and journalists are silent on the real origin of terrorism. The imperialist wars in the Middle East, in which Germany actively participates, have not only destroyed entire societies and created the conditions that nourish terrorism. At the same time, the major powers, above all the United States, have armed and funded Islamist organisations to enforce their interests in the region.

In the Syrian civil war, they support so-called rebels, made up chiefly of the former al-Nusra Front, which are composed of Islamist jihadis fighting for the overthrow of the government.

The *World Socialist Web Site* has pointed to the connection between war policies and the domestic buildup of the state, writing, “The Western powers are cooperating in Syria with the same forces which serve

at home as the pretext for constructing a police state and for military interventions in the name of the ‘war against terrorism.’”



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