

After Hamburg G20 protests: SPD, Left Party and Greens prepare law-and-order election campaign

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If further proof were necessary that a potential “red-red-green” government in Germany—i.e., a coalition of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), Left Party and Greens—does not represent a left-wing alternative to the present, “grand coalition” under Chancellor Angela Merkel of the right-wing Christian Democratic Union (CDU), recent days have provided it.

In the wake of the protests and violent state repression during the G20 summit in Hamburg, the SPD, Left Party and Greens are showing their true colours as parties of bourgeois order. They have lined up with the CDU, Free Democratic Party (FDP) and ultra-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) behind the brutal police crackdown, and exploited the events to wage a law-and-order election campaign.

Olaf Scholz, Hamburg’s SPD mayor, declared his full solidarity with the police in a televised interview. “I have always supported the police’s firm stance, in the lead-up to and during the summit, and I continue to do so afterwards,” he said. Asked whether the security forces had acted too harshly, he provocatively responded, “There was no police violence, that is a denunciation that I firmly reject ... There were very level-headed, very courageous and very tough interventions by the police. And the police really did everything possible.”

In the same breath, Scholz threatened to punish potential violent demonstrators. A “large emergency commission” would “evaluate all of the material evidence we have secured and then initiate criminal proceedings.” This would “certainly result in major charges and stiff judgements, and some who now think they got away undetected in spite of the things they did will hopefully be left wondering.”

We already noted in an earlier article that the SPD is drawing on the traditions of the murderous Gustav Noske, the first Social Democratic defence minister, who stated during the November Revolution of 1918, “In my opinion, somebody needs to be the bloodhound! I do not shrink before that responsibility!” Noske and the SPD brutally suppressed the workers uprising at the end of the war, including through the assassination of revolutionaries Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

Today, of course, the SPD has moved much farther to the right and has absolutely nothing to do with the working class and its social conditions. It is the party of reactionary welfare “reforms” and war, and it defends only the interests of the banks, large corporations, military and intelligence services.

As a result, the SPD is justifiably reviled by wide layers of the population. “What is he doing here? Martin [Schulz] get lost!”, “Traacherous swine!” and “Nobody needs you here!” were only a few of the comments SPD Chancellor candidate Martin Schulz confronted at a campaign stop in Hamburg’s Schanze district on Friday, according to the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

The Social Democrats respond to this open popular hostility by becoming even more right wing. As it did a century ago, the SPD is resorting to violence and appealing to the most reactionary and sinister forces to suppress protests against social inequality, militarism and war.

The Greens and Left Party have indicated they are fully on board with this programme. They have been no less fervent in their defence of the police witch-hunt against the left.

Green Party parliamentary group leader Anjes Tjarks

commented, “Hamburg has passed through a difficult summit week, which pushed our citizens, but above all the security forces, to their limits. For this reason I thank the police on our streets in particular. An incredible amount was demanded of them. They worked until they were completely worn out. For that they have earned our great respect and thanks. Therefore it is also right that the state does its part by offering compensatory free time, the payout of overtime hours and additional holidays.”

Sahra Wagenknecht, the Left Party’s parliamentary group leader and lead candidate in the federal election, defended the police on Thursday on public broadcaster ARD. The police bore no responsibility for the vandalism, she said, but rather the vandalisers. “I think that what happened in Hamburg was bad. It was simply hardcore vandals.” The Left Party politician did not say a word about the widespread police violence and the numerous reports of police provocateurs among the hooligans.

That the SPD, Left Party and Greens now place defence of the security forces at the heart of their election campaigns amounts to support for what is in practice a police state to suppress the population. The clashes, which were provoked by the authorities and allowed to take place in order to fuel the law-and-order campaign, were not the extraordinary event in Hamburg, but rather the ruthless state violence against peaceful demonstrators that is increasingly coming to light.

A student told the *Hamburger Morgenpost* on Thursday how on the way to Rondenbarg (Bahrenfeld) protesters were forced onto a wall by the security forces, who then knocked it down. “The police kicked the barrier and pushed it until it collapsed.” Even though people were lying two metres deep, with broken bones, the officers continued to force others down from the wall, shouting, “Anti-fascist swine! This is just for starters!” Some of those injured remain in hospital.

The protest collective “Everything for All” [Alles allen] documented similarly brutal acts by the police in an open letter to Scholz and Hamburg’s Interior Senator Andy Grote (SPD). The group explained that, along with the police assault on the officially approved camp in Entenwerder Park and the peaceful protest on Thursday, the most “characteristic event was a deliberate attack by the USK [support commandos]

Bavaria” near Hamburg’s Pferdemarkt on Saturday evening.

Many protesters were injured as a result. One peaceful individual was attacked so severely that the police broke her leg, as well as giving her a head injury. The police did not even stop when a large number of their victims lay on the ground. Instead, they continued to kick and beat those they had knocked down.



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