

Conservative daily promotes Germany's nuclear armament

Sven Heymanns
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“The German elites want war again—We do not!” is one of the slogans the Socialist Equality Party (SGP) is advancing in the Bundestag (parliamentary) election. The urgency of this warning was demonstrated by two articles published in the conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) recently. One calls for Germany to arm itself with nuclear weapons for a war against nuclear powers China and Russia. The other opposes the prohibition against non-nuclear countries acquiring atomic weapons.

Under the headline, “Atomic submarines for the Baltic Sea,” Maximilian Terhalle writes that “Germany, together with Poland and the Baltic, should now also use the know-how Israel has long made available about nuclear-armed submarines for its own protection. Such nuclear-equipped vessels should operate as a deterrent in the Baltic.”

“The nuclear protection of Europe must be re-conceptualized” with France and Britain, the article continues. “Germany’s contribution must be directed towards its own abilities,” that is, to build up its own nuclear arsenal.

Terhalle’s demands for Germany to have its own nuclear weapons are embedded in a long complaint about Berlin’s lack of a real foreign policy strategy. The “mantra” that “Germany should assume more responsibility for security policy” was launched years ago, “primarily at the Munich Security Conference,” he writes. However, if one asks how this should look concretely, “this is often met only with empty phrases”.

The foreign operations of the Bundeswehr (armed forces) were not being determined according to strategic criteria, complains Terhalle. For this reason, they have “led to an irresponsible erosion of the strategic orientation and capacities of Germany over the past 20 years.” In other words: Germany had always

oriented its foreign policy only in response to acute conflicts, but not according to its own world-strategic interests.

Terhalle sees the “vital security-policy and economic foundations of our existence” threatened above all by China and Russia. Islamic terrorism also is not given sufficient weight, he adds. He believes a war between China and the United States, “which would only remain strictly limited in the best scenario,” is unavoidable because of the “lack of compromise on both sides.”

As far as Terhalle is concerned, this is where Germany must act “in association with others.” Since there are enormous economic interests on the ground there—almost a third of German trade is conducted with the Far East—Germany would be directly affected. But what Germany lacks is a “militarily underpinned strategy” to deal with China’s supposed expansionist policies.

More importantly for Terhalle is Germany arming itself with nuclear weapons against Russia. In his opinion, Germany has missed a great opportunity in this regard. At the beginning of this year, the Baltic states, even Poland, had demanded stronger German engagement in Eastern Europe and “visibly welcomed” the idea of a European nuclear arsenal under German leadership. But in Germany, the proposal had been rejected by politicians and the media “lock, stock and barrel.”

Two days later, the FAZ further stoked the fire. In a guest commentary titled, “A nuclear ban would be damaging,” Karl-Heinz Kamp argued that there are “good reasons against a world free of nuclear weapons.” The condemnation of nuclear weapons, as demanded by their opponents, undermined “the idea of nuclear deterrence for the prevention of war, upon which NATO has successfully rested for almost seven

decades.” A ban on nuclear weapons soothed “one’s own conscience in an uncertain world ... it does not contribute to greater security and stability.”

The idea that a nuclear arms race in Europe and Germany’s armament with atomic weapons would contribute to “more security and stability” is sheer insanity.

An article published in the July/August edition of the journal *Internationale Politik* paints the following scenario: “If Germany were to build its own genuine military nuclear potential, the risk of conflict in Europe would be considerably exacerbated. Russia would probably do something to prevent a German rearmament. It could try to have German scientists assassinated, to paralyse industrial plants with cyberattacks, or perhaps even to destroy them with air strikes.”

If it really came to nuclear war, either in Europe or in China, it would cost hundreds of millions of lives and probably mean the end of humanity.

But Terhalle and Kamp are not insane, at least not in the clinical sense, but are well-connected servants of the ruling class. Terhalle is a political scientist and major in the reserve. He is currently teaching at the University of Winchester in England.

Kamp has worked for the Christian Democrats’ Konrad Adenauer Foundation, and for NATO, for many years. Since October 2015, he has been president of the Federal Academy for Security Policy (BAKS) in Berlin. BAKS functions as a think tank as well as a training institution for state and political leaders in the fields of security and defence policy. As can be seen on its web site, it is “directly linked to the federal government as a central training institution.” Its leading body, the Board of Trustees, is also the Bundessicherheitsrat (Federal Security Council), which is composed of a number of federal ministers and is chaired by the chancellor.

The fact that a leading member of the security apparatus like Kamp publishes such a piece in the FAZ shows how far the discussion about the armament of the Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons has already advanced behind closed doors.

The fact that these contributions appeared in the FAZ is no coincidence. The newspaper plays a leading role in the ideological preparations for war. For example, it has defended professors Herfried Münkler and Jörg

Baberowski in hysterical articles against students who denounced their militaristic and ultra-right views—especially against the SGP and its youth organization, the IYSSE.

In his book “Macht in der Mitte” (“Power in the Middle”), Münkler had already declared two years ago that Germany had to go from being “paymaster” to become “Europe’s task master.” Significantly, he is also a member of the BAKS Advisory Board and is involved in foreign policy discussions at the highest level. Baberowski minimises the crimes of the Nazis, rails against refugees, and asserts that violence can only be answered by counter-violence, and that the terrorists’ own methods must be used in the fight against them.

The call for German nuclear weapons in one of the most powerful German daily newspapers two months before the Bundestag elections is a warning. In its plans to impose its imperialist interests a third time on the global arena, the German ruling class will shrink from nothing. It is therefore all the more urgent to build the SGP as a new socialist mass party. The SGP is the only party that places the struggle against militarism and war at the centre of its election campaign and links this with the struggle against their source, capitalism. We call on all readers to contact us today and support the election campaign of the SGP financially.



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