

Far-right Alternative for Germany receives cross-party support

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On Tuesday, all of the political parties represented in the German parliament (Bundestag) agreed that a deputy from the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) can chair the most important parliamentary committee, the Budget Committee. The AfD will also head the committees on legal affairs and tourism.

The leadership of the Budget Committee is traditionally assigned to the main opposition party, which will be the AfD in the event of a renewal of a grand coalition between the conservative parties (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union—CDU/CSU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD). This accepted practice is, however, not binding. The distribution of committees is determined by the heads of the various parliamentary groupings, and they could have decided otherwise.

Instead, the right-wing extremists are being allowed by the other parties to occupy central positions on Bundestag committees that are crucial for the work of the parliament. The Budget Committee is responsible for forging agreement on budgetary resources and has a decisive influence on all other government departments. Outlays from the Euro Rescue Fund, for example, must be approved by the committee.

In recent years, the Legal Affairs Committee has prepared laws curtailing fundamental democratic rights. It has jurisdiction over the NetzDG law, which obliges social networks to censor Internet content. The law has already been used extensively to censor left-wing web sites, a practice that is bound to intensify with the AfD chairing the committee.

Allowing right-wing extremists to head such important committees is supported not only by those parties negotiating a renewal of the grand coalition, but also by the opposition parties. “Completely in order,” was the comment by the parliamentary manager of the

Greens, Britta Haßelmann. Gesine Löttsch of the Left Party told the media that it was quite natural for the AfD to assume leadership positions.

The AfD has evidently been encouraged by such statements and has appointed three of its most notorious right-wingers for the three committees. According to the AfD, Peter Boehringer is to head the Budget Committee. Shortly after joining the AfD in 2015, Boehringer criticised the party’s leader at the time, Bernd Lucke, and called for a campaign against the “over-exploitation of Germany by millions of illegal economic refugees and Muslims seeking to convert our culture.”

Boehringer is notorious for his fascist remarks. In October of the same year, he ranted about the “threat to the right of ownership of autochthonous Europeans who have cultivated European land as their property and are now unwilling to surrender it to millions of invaders through brutal, supranational or even supra-state violence.” He accuses the central banks of “money socialism” and in the manner of right-wing conspiracy theorists, speaks of a “supranational elite” that operates to “disempower nation-states.”

The German public broadcasters WDR and NDR have published excerpts from Boehringer’s letters, which display his contempt for humanity and his vulgarity, and make clear how such social scum is being elevated into the highest government offices.

The same applies to Stephan Brandner, whom the AfD wants to install as chairman of the Legal Affairs Committee. Brandner is a confidante of the neo-Nazi AfD leader Björn Höcke. He has described a typical Syrian family as “father, mother and two goats” and slandered antifascists as the product of inbreeding and sodomy.

The Tourism Committee is to be headed by an AfD

thug. Last October, 28-year-old Sebastian Münzenmaier was sentenced to six months in prison and placed on probation with a fine of 10,000 euros. In 2012, he assisted hooligans attached to a football club in Kaiserslautern in assaulting and beating up fans of a rival club.

This ultra-right cabal will now be involved in key parliamentary work with the support of all the parliamentary parties. In its editorial on Tuesday, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* celebrated the way in which the Bundestag had finally been constituted as a “central authority” and was going about its work “in a collegial way,” as distinct from the situation that prevails in the coalition negotiations. The AfD should not be “marginalized” or “curtailed in their parliamentary rights,” declared Reinhard Müller in the comment.

The fact that right-wing extremists are being courted and integrated into parliamentary work highlights the character of the government currently being negotiated by the conservative Union parties and the SPD.

The grand coalition exploratory paper, which was adopted by an SPD party congress last weekend as the basis for coalition negotiations, reveals that the three parties are essentially implementing the program of the AfD. The CDU, CSU and SPD are planning the most right-wing government since the downfall of the Nazi regime.

The paper includes extremely restrictive refugee policies, an aggressive foreign policy, massive attacks on workers’ social rights and the build-up of the state apparatus. Leading representatives such as Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel (SPD) and Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) have made it clear that the grand coalition will be committed to massive rearmament and German great power politics.

This reactionary program is embodied in the AfD and the scum it mobilises. The party was deliberately built up by the ruling class to enforce policies of militarism and social cuts against popular opposition. Now it is being employed for precisely these ends.

The broad support for the AfD’s involvement in parliamentary work underlines the fact that there is no force in the Bundestag willing to fight against the right-wing policies of the grand coalition and the AfD. The only way to prevent the installation of a new right-wing government is to mobilize the working class on the

basis of a socialist program. To this end, the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) demands and fights for new elections to expose the ruling class conspiracy against the working class and raise the necessity for a socialist alternative.

The author also recommends:

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