

Hundreds of neo-Nazis chant anti-Semitic slogans in Dortmund, Germany

Ulrich Rippert
24 September 2018

On Friday evening, several hundred Neo-nazis marched through a residential area in the working-class German city of Dortmund. They waved black-white-red imperial flags and roared neo-Nazi slogans. Their main slogan was, “Those who love Germany are anti-Semitic”. They also chanted, “Police, democracy, you’ll never break us” and “National Socialism [Nazism] now!” The police left the Nazis undisturbed and did not intervene.

That same day, radical right-wingers once again marched through the city in Chemnitz. According to media reports, followers of the “Pro Chemnitz” alliance attacked the offices of the Left Party, where many members of the Saxony state legislature are based. A journalist was also said to have been attacked during the right-wing march.

On Saturday, in the Bavarian city of Bamberg, a so-called “anchor centre” for refugees was burnt down. It took several hours for the fire to be extinguished and to evacuate hundreds of asylum-seekers. The police said the cause of the fire was unclear, and that there was no evidence of arson or a xenophobic attack.

The anti-Semitic character of these right-wing attacks has caused outrage around the world. At the end of August, a dozen neo-Nazis had attacked the Jewish restaurant “Shalom” in Chemnitz with stones, bottles and steel pipes and verbally abused the owner. In New York, a spokesman for the World Jewish Congress called on the German government to intervene against the rise of anti-Semitic attacks.

But the German government is the wrong address for such demands. That today—85 years after the seizure of power by the Nazis and the subsequent fascist terror in Europe, which cost the lives of 6 million Jews—Nazi gangs are again marching through the streets and chanting anti-Semitic slogans under the eyes of the police is the product of the policy of the German government. The grand coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU)

and Social Democrats (SPD) is responsible for the return of the Nazi hordes.

The grand coalition, whose constituent parties all saw their votes plummet in the general election last year, and which is deeply hated, has adopted the slogan of the neo-Nazis: “Foreigners out!” as the guiding line of its refugee policy. The government has set up an inhumane system of concentration camps to detain, bureaucratically bully and deport refugees as quickly as possible.

Interior Minister Seehofer (CSU) stated that immigration was the “mother of all problems”. At the end of August, when extreme right-wing thugs hunted down and attacked foreigners in Chemnitz and also attacked a Jewish restaurant, Seehofer said the demonstrators were “concerned citizens” and added that as a citizen of Chemnitz, he too would have taken to the streets.

Together with the then head of the secret service, Hans-Georg Massen, the interior minister downplayed the events. Massen had offered neo-Nazis his protection by denying refugees had even been “hunted down” in Chemnitz. Right to the last, Seehofer refused to sack Massen; instead, he has been promoted to an influential post in the interior ministry.

Massen enjoys close connections to right-wing circles. He is a supporter of the Alternative for Germany (AfD), which has an openly neo-fascist wing. He had conducted several discussions with AfD leaders and made sure that the party was not cited as a right-wing extremist organisation in the annual Constitutional Protection Report prepared by the secret service. Instead all those who oppose the far right are stigmatized in the report as “left-wing extremists”.

A key role in this right-wing conspiracy is played by the SPD.

When Massen’s promotion triggered a storm of indignation in broad sections of the population, SPD leader Andrea Nahles suggested “re-negotiating” the

“Massen case” to ensure the growing political influence of this AfD supporter in the government was concealed as far as possible. Following the recent top-level talks, he would no longer be a state secretary but a “special advisor” to the interior ministry and continue to receive his full pay of more than ten thousand euros a month.

Nahles is seeking to keep the grand coalition in office in the face of growing popular resistance. In a letter to the SPD membership, she justifies the continuing collaboration with Merkel, Seehofer and Co. as follows: “Europe is facing a crucial test, there is a threat of a trade war with the US, the situation concerning Syria requires all our diplomatic skill. That is why it is important for the SPD to preserve an effective federal government.”

The SPD had aspired to continue the grand coalition in the spring and is now defending it with all its might because it regards this government as the political instrument with which it can pursue the economic and geostrategic interests of German imperialism in the very crisis that Nahles addressed in her letter to the membership. She is reacting to the crisis in Europe with a policy of increased German dominance, and is using the growing trade war with the US as an opportunity to push through a program of massive military rearmament.

Watch David North’s remarks commemorating 25 years of the *World Socialist Web Site* and donate today.

An interview with ex-SPD leader and former Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel in the new edition of *Der Spiegel* makes this clear. He warns that the “big question concerning Germany’s place in the world” remains unanswered.

With the presidency of Donald Trump, the US had given up its leading role in the Western world, he said. “We are experiencing a struggle for the sovereignty of Europe in a completely different world.” However, according to Gabriel, it was also “a good thing if we Europeans are forced to take our fate into our own hands.” The danger today emanating from Germany was not the danger of military dominance, but “the dominance of inaction.”

Gabriel calls for “more strategic debates,” declaring: “First, we must understand that moral rigor can be just as wrong as forgoing morality.” In this rejection of morality, he is echoing the statements of political scientist Herfried Münkler. The professor at Humboldt University has emphasized repeatedly that “we Germans are always content to uphold morality. It would be better if we would admit that we also have interests.”

Münkler called for Germany, as the “power in the

middle,” to be the “champion of Europe” in order to be able to play a role in world politics. The professor was well aware that German rearmament requires the whitewashing of Germany’s past crimes. He said, “There is hardly any responsible policy in Europe if you have the idea that we have been to blame for everything. With regard to 1914 [the outbreak of World War I], that is a legend.”

His colleague at Humboldt University, Professor of Eastern European History Jörg Baberowski, took on the task of downplaying the crimes of the Nazis. That same year, he defended Ernst Nolte, the most well known Nazi apologist among German historians, and went so far as to defend Adolf Hitler. “Hitler was not a psychopath, he was not vicious. He did not want talk about exterminating the Jews at his table,” he told the most popular German news magazine *Der Spiegel*.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party--SGP) and its youth organization, the IYSSE, were the only political organizations to oppose this historical falsification. “Efforts to establish an historically false narrative coincide with a critical turning point in German history,” the SGP and IYSSE said in February 2014, referring to the federal government’s announcement that Germany’s decades of military restraint were now over. “The revival of German militarism requires a new interpretation of history that minimises the crimes of the Nazi era.”

Recent events have confirmed the correctness of this assessment. The return of German militarism revives all the ghosts of the past. The only way to prevent the revival of Nazism and imperialist militarism is to mobilize the working class on the basis of a revolutionary socialist program.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact