Following right-wing terrorist attack in Hanau

German government strengthens intelligence agencies and right-wing networks in state apparatus

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The German government and all the established parties responded to the far-right terrorist attack in Hanau, which claimed the lives of nine immigrants last Wednesday, by demanding a strengthening of the repressive state apparatus and the intelligence agencies, which have close ties to right-wing extremist terrorist networks. The demands range from an expansion of internet censorship, to more police officers, and the strengthening of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Verfassungsschutz), Germany's domestic spy agency.

At a press conference on Friday, Interior Minister Horst Seehofer (Christian Social Union, CSU) remarked, "We will strengthen the surveillance of sensitive institutions, particularly mosques. The federal police will support local state police forces with personnel and expertise, and we will ensure an increased presence of federal police officers at train stations, airports, and near the borders." The Federal Police Office and the Verfassungsschutz will "use all available options to the full to secure intelligence in a timely manner."

Coming from the lips of Seehofer, these words are a threat. The right-wing extremist terrorist networks have close ties to the army, police, and intelligence services. They maintain kill lists with tens of thousands of targets, and have left a bloody trail of destruction, including dozens of deaths in the terrorist attacks by the National Socialist Underground (NSU), and the most recent attacks in Munich, Halle, and Hanau. If the Interior Ministry strengthens these forces further, it will not be to combat the terrorists, but to encourage them.

Seehofer has repeatedly declared his solidarity with far-right and fascistic forces, and all but encouraged them to carry out attacks. For example, he stated following the far-right rampage in Chemnitz in 2018, in which immigrants were hunted down and a Jewish restaurant attacked, that he would have marched with them if he were not a government minister. He subsequently described "the immigration question" as "the mother of all problems in this country," and stated, "Islam does not belong to Germany."

The Verfassungsschutz, which operates under his authority as Interior Minister, is a key component of the far-right conspiracy. Several dozen informants from the secret service and police operated around the right-wing terrorist group NSU, which was responsible for the murders of nine immigrants and a police officer between 2000 and 2007. An employee of the state Verfassungsschutz in Hesse, Andreas Temme, was even at the crime scene during one of the murders. Temme was also "professionally involved" with Stephan Ernst, the suspected murderer of Kassel district President Walter Lübcke, according to official documents.

Under the leadership of Hans-Georg Maassen (Christian Democrats, CDU), the federal Verfassungsschutz was led for years by an open supporter of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), who defended fascistic terrorist forces and practically waged war against left-wing forces. The morning after the Hanau massacre, by which time it was clear that the gunman, Tobias R., was an outspoken racist and militarist, Maassen tweeted provocatively, "Socialist logic. Criminals are always right-wing, victims always left-wing."

Under Maassen's successor Thomas Haldenwang (CDU), the government's course has not changed. On the contrary, while the far-right networks can operate virtually unhindered and carry out murders, the real enemy of the state remains the left. The government's latest edition of the Verfassungsschutz Report mentions the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP)—Socialist Equality Party—as an "object of surveillance" because it irreconcilably combats the AfD and German militarism, and advocates an anticapitalist, socialist programme.

It is clear that the strengthening of the state apparatus,

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which is dominated by far-right networks, will be aimed above all at intimidating and suppressing widespread hostility to militarism and fascism. The token statements made by Seehofer and other representatives of the Grand Coalition cannot conceal this fact. The ruling elite is justifying the strengthening of the repressive state apparatus with references to a struggle against the far-right only due to the mass anger and opposition triggered by the latest terrorist attack.

"It's absolutely clear that the AfD is a party that needs to be surveilled by the Verfassungsschutz," commented SPD General Secretary Lars Klingbeil on the ARD's Morgenmagazin show on Friday. There was "one person who fired the shots in Hanau ... but many people provided him with munition, and that definitely includes the AfD," he added. Klingbeil went as far as to declare that the AfD was the "political arm of the far-right."

Representatives of the Greens and Left Party spoke along similar lines and combined their loud calls for more state surveillance with hypocritical criticism of the AfD. The AfD's hate speech "fed" the right-wing terrorists, commented the Left Party group's head of parliamentary affairs, Jan Korte, who added that "all security agencies must wake up."

Workers and young people who want to oppose the return of fascism in Germany and internationally will reject the ruling elite's hypocrisy with the contempt it deserves. The reality is that the responsibility for the terrorist attacks is not borne by the AfD alone, but also by the Grand Coalition and its supporters in the Left Party and Greens. If the AfD is "the political arm of the right-wing extremists," then the far-right-infiltrated security agencies are its state arm, and the federal and state governments are its enablers.

In particular, the SPD has played a key role in providing the "munition" for the AfD and right-wing terrorism. With its decision to continue the Grand Coalition inspite of a massive loss of votes in 2017, the SPD made the AfD the official opposition and then systematically integrated the party into the work of parliament. Notorious right-wing extremist agitators like the former chair of the parliamentary justice committee Stefan Brandner, who posted anti-Semitic tweets following the attack on a synagogue in Halle, were elevated to their positions with SPD support.

The massacre in Hanau occurred just two weeks after the Free Democrat politician Thomas Kemmerich was elected as minister president in Thuringia with the support of the AfD. At the same time, the Social Democrat Humboldt University President Sabine Kunst and federal Education Minister Anja Karliczek defended the right-wing extremist historian and Nazi apologist Jörg Baberowski ("Hitler was not vicious") after the professor physically attacked a left-wing student on the campus of Humboldt University.

Leading representatives of the Left Party and Greens have also previously backed Baberowski and have, like Sahra Wagenknecht and the mayor of Tübingen Boris Palmer, agitated against refugees in the style of the AfD. They even sought an alliance with Maassen. According to Interior Ministry protocols, Maassen held 200 discussions with politicians from all parties in parliament. The Left Party even invited Maassen to a public discussion in March 2013 in order to stand side by side with the chief of the domestic intelligence agency.

The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (SGP) is the only party that has irreconcilably opposed the right-wing conspiracy from the outset on the basis of a clear political perspective. Now, it's time to stop it! We call for the protests against the far-right to be expanded and linked up with the strikes and protests being waged by the international working class. The decisive question is the conscious struggle for a socialist perspective and the building of the SGP and the International Committee of the Fourth International as the revolutionary leadership of the international working class.

We demand the following:

- Stop the conspiracy by the Grand Coalition, the state apparatus, and right-wing extremists!
- Dissolve the secret service, and an immediate halt to the surveillance of the SGP and other left organizations!
- No more war! Stop Germany's return to a militarist great power policy!
- Defend the right to asylum! No to the militarisation of the state and surveillance!
- End poverty and exploitation! For social equality! The super-wealthy, banks, and corporations must be expropriated and placed under democratic control!
- For a socialist programme against fascism, militarism, and war!

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