

One year after anti-Semitic terrorist attack in Halle

# Right-wing extremist networks in German state apparatus continue to grow

**Jan Ritter**

13 October 2020

The first anniversary of the terrorist attack on a synagogue in Halle, Germany, which nearly led to the worst massacre of Jews in Europe since the Second World War, was marked last Friday. On October 9, 2019, the neo-Nazi Stefan Balliet sought to force his way into the Halle synagogue on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. He shot two people in the process. Only the strong wooden door, which remained firmly shut, prevented a massacre.

All of the declarations of sympathy and crocodile tears shed by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier at the commemoration in Halle on Friday cannot conceal the fact that responsibility for far-right terrorism is borne by the ruling class. Over recent years, it has systematically created the ideological and political climate within which right-wing extremist acts of bloody violence like those in Halle and Hanau could flourish.

Representatives of all parliamentary parties applaud the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) and implement the fascist party's anti-refugee policies. Politicians and the media downplay xenophobic demonstrators as "concerned citizens" and defend right-wing extremist academics, like the Humboldt University professor Jörg Baberowski ("Hitler was not vicious"). Right-wing extremist networks in the intelligence agencies, military and police are consciously built up and covered up by the bourgeois state and its parties and continue to expand.

Recent days have seen several new instances of right-wing extremists within the German state apparatus come to light. "Monitor," a programme on public broadcaster ARD, reported on a far-right chat group within the Berlin state police, and the right-wing extremist network exposed just three weeks ago in the police in North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW) also has ties to the state intelligence agency in the country's most populous state, according to research by the *Rheinische Post* (RP).

In mid-September, a wide-ranging right-wing extremist network with ties to all three command structures within the

NRW state police was exposed in Müllheim. Five further cases have now been uncovered. The workplace and apartment of an officer from Bielefeld was searched. According to a report on *tagesschau.de*, the commissioner shared right-wing extremist propaganda in a private police chat group with 50 members. In addition, it was revealed that three members of the observation team in the state intelligence service, and an administrative specialist in the state interior ministry, were right-wing extremist suspects.

NRW Interior Minister Herbert Reul (Christian Democrats, CDU) told a press conference that the members shared Islamophobic and anti-immigrant videos in chat groups and on social media. He told the *RP*, "In the videos, all Muslims were described as a threat." Reul still relativised the racist outlook of his co-worker, stating that although the chats were unacceptable, they were much less serious than the content discovered in Müllheim.

Reul's colleague maintained contacts via Facebook in the right-wing extremist milieu. The three members of the observation team were responsible, among other things, for the surveillance of right-wing extremists. In other words, the Nazis carry out surveillance on themselves. Reul added incredibly that there was no evidence to suggest that operational secrets had been betrayed or that the surveillance was not conducted according to protocol.

The NRW interior minister acknowledges having known about the cases that have now become public for almost a year. A week ago, Reul told the committee for internal affairs in the NRW state parliament that 100 employees of the police had been suspected of racism or right-wing extremism since 2017. Twenty-nine cases have been closed, although there were only eight instances in which the investigations resulted in consequences for the officers concerned. In the remaining 21 cases, "the suspicion was not confirmed" or "it was not possible due to other reasons to impose disciplinary measures," reported *Der Spiegel*.

"The affected team in the state intelligence service was

dissolved and its leadership replaced,” explained the Interior Ministry. One of the officers was disciplined following an emergency investigation so as to avoid drawing attention to the right-wing extremist structures in the state apparatus, which have been built up from above and remain under special protection. This is a clear instance of the Interior Ministry attempting to cover up the true extent of the right-wing extremist networks in the security agencies through disinformation and distraction.

Federal Interior Minister Horst Seehofer (Christian Social Union, CSU) presented a report assessing the state of right-wing extremism in the security agencies on October 6. It downplayed the far-right networks within the state apparatus and gave a free pass to racists and anti-Semites.

Following the exposure of a series of groups in the police, intelligence services and military, which have exchanged neo-Nazi and anti-Semitic chats, threatened left-wing lawyers and activists, hoarded weaponry and prepared for a violent uprising on “Day X,” Seehofer was forced to admit that there were over 400 suspected cases of right-wing extremism within the federal and state security services between 2017 and April 2020. However, he claimed that there is “no structural right-wing extremism” within the security services.

In reality, Seehofer’s figures are a vast undercount. Firstly, the figures do not include the military, which had 1,064 suspected official cases over the same period. Secondly, the figures are based on reports provided by the right-wing extremist-infested security agencies themselves; there was no independent investigation. Thirdly, the sharp increases in cases since March are not included. In NRW alone, suspected cases have increased from 45 to 104 since March. Finally, the unreported number of cases is many multiples higher, because the police and army are dominated by a siege mentality that views any sharing of information as a “betrayal.”

The Interior Ministry in NRW has maintained a deliberate silence on the contents of the videos and chats, and the possible links between the four latest cases and the far-right network within the NRW police uncovered in mid-September. It is clear that the fascist content and wide-ranging terrorist plans are to be concealed.

The communications in the right-wing extremist chat group within the Berlin police, which were made public by the ARD magazine *Monitor*, expose the growth of fascism within the German police.

Racism, hatred of left-wing individuals and violent fantasies were shared in an entirely normal manner along with plans to meet up for breakfast or sport. The group, consisting of more than 25 officers, has existed for three years. Although only seven officers were allegedly

responsible for the right-wing extremist content, their fascist agitation received enthusiastic support from their colleagues.

According to the two informants who gave *Monitor* access to the contents of the chat group, Berlin police officers regularly use expressions while on duty like “n---er, Moor, darky, oily-eye, faggot, trans.”

One female group leader ordered an obviously racist police control by writing, “We’ll stop the oily-eye there.” The head of a Berlin service team was cited as saying, “We also have headscarf terrorists cleaning here.” Superiors were aware of the contents of the chats, which *Monitor* has now made public, but did nothing about them.

The right-wing extremist officers exchanged messages describing Muslims as a “fanatical primate culture,” and refugees as swarming “like locusts over Europe,” “rapists, murderers, organised criminals and terrorists” and “rats.” They referred in their exchanges to the “great replacement in Europe,” according to which the white population is being intentionally replaced by immigrants.

Similar tirades were to be found in Balliet’s manifesto, which the Halle terrorist published shortly before his murderous rampage. The police chat groups also contain explicit calls for refugees and left-wing protesters to be murdered.

For example, the armed officers who were members of the chat group demanded a fascist ideological test before new recruits would be accepted into the police. One of the practical tasks would allegedly be, “Shoot six illegal immigrants.” Referring to how the police deal with immigrants, they demanded that in order to create the necessary respect for the police, “every day...one must be [sent] to the afterlife.”

Referring to the G-20 demonstrators in Hamburg, they called for “the use of firearms” and “blasting them.” They also saw neo-Nazis as “allies” with whom they could establish a “powerful striking force” to “throw a party for the right-wing.”



To contact the WSWS and the  
Socialist Equality Party visit:  
**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**