

Right-wing extremist network exposed in Frankfurt, Germany police special operations unit

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Another right-wing extremist group has been discovered in the ranks of the police in the German state of Hesse. The state prosecutor is investigating 20 officers from the Frankfurt special operations unit (SEK) because they shared Nazi symbols in a chat group and engaged in hate speech.

On Wednesday morning, the state bureau of criminal police searched the apartments and workplaces of six members of the elite unit. Christian Democrat (CDU) Interior Minister Peter Beuth then announced Thursday the dissolution of the unit. “We are initiating a fundamental new start for the SEK,” he said. There will be a complete organisational restructuring and a new leadership culture, Beuth insisted.

“The future is of course unthinkable without our special forces,” he continued, “but under a different set of guidelines.”

According to the official version of events, the police were made aware of the group when they were investigating a 38-year-old officer last summer suspected of possessing child pornography. The confiscated phones and computers not only contained child pornography, but also pictures of Hitler, swastikas, and insults against asylum seekers that the officer shared with his colleagues in a chat group.

The Hesse state bureau of criminal police (LKA) took over the investigation in April this year. Like the SEK, the LKA operates under the direction of Interior Minister Beuth.

The government and opposition parties responded with feigned horror over the latest revelations. Beuth, for his part, described it as “totally unacceptable” for police officers from such a highly specialised unit to talk to each other in these types of chats. All police officers must “be aware at all times that any misconduct will be thoroughly investigated.” Given the accusations, he determined “that none of the accused people are any longer suited to serve in a special operations unit in Hesse.” Where it is legally possible, he added, they will be removed from the Hesse state police.

The president of the Frankfurt police, Gerhard Beresvill,

declared at a press conference on Wednesday that the behaviour of which the officers are accused struck at the foundations of democracy and rule of law. “With a suspicion of misconduct, it is essential to intervene early and act decisively,” he stated. A thorough uncovering of the facts would be the top priority.

Beresvill claimed that the exposure has a positive side because it makes it possible to improve preventative work. “The fact that a small number of our colleagues still think that they don’t have to respect the rules of our profession incentivises us to continue and intensify efforts to correct our mistakes,” he said.

The head of parliamentary affairs for the Social Democrat (SPD) group in the Hesse state parliament, Günter Rudolph, raged, “This new case of right-wing extremist activity within the Hesse police explodes all dimensions.” He called on Interior Minister Beuth to finally take political responsibility.

The interior policy spokesman for the Left Party, Hermann Schaus, commented that one can “only watch the scandals produced by the Hesse police with cynicism.” Beuth must explain “how he intends to finally bring the Hesse police out of the negative headlines.”

These are all transparent efforts at a cover-up and to treat the population like fools. In reality, the Nazi chat group confirms that the state security agencies are teeming with right-wing extremist networks, and that these elements are protected and promoted by the state and the political establishment.

Hesse in particular, which is home to the banking capital Frankfurt, is a centre of this right-wing extremist conspiracy. It was in this state on the night of June 2, 2019 that Kassel district president Walter Lübcke was murdered by right-wing extremist Stephan Ernst, who had been surveilled by the intelligence services for 30 years. Ernst was active—like the members of the National Socialist Underground terrorist group—in the militant neo-Nazi milieu in Kassel, which was

full of informants from the police and intelligence agencies.

The intelligence agent Andreas Temme, who supervised several right-wing extremist informants, was at the scene when the NSU murdered the internet cafe owner Halit Yozgat in Kassel. He was never called to testify and was working in Lübcke's government department when Lübcke was murdered. The files on these events have been placed under lock and key for at least 30 years by Interior Minister Beuth.

In the Frankfurt police presidium, under whose command the SEK operates, a right-wing extremist chat group called "Itiotentest" was discovered three years ago. Investigators discovered the group while searching for the source of death threats sent to individuals and signed "NSU 2.0." Information about the Frankfurt-based lawyer Ba?ay-Y?ld?z that was not publicly available had been accessed from a computer in the Frankfurt police presidium a short time earlier.

In the course of the investigation, a growing number of cases were discovered, including in other police presidiums. There have been 94 proceedings brought against Hesse police officers suspected of having right-wing extremist views. In February, four men were charged with sharing racist pictures, Hitler images and Nazi memorabilia. Similar far-right chat groups involving police officers were found in North-Rhine Westphalia in September 2020.

When the investigation into the Frankfurt chat group was in full swing and the media began reporting about it, the SEK officers continued to chat unhindered. Most of the chats discovered came from a period between 2016 and 2017, but messages were still being shared in 2019. The SEK officers obviously felt very safe.

Then in early May this year, police arrested a 53-year-old right-wing extremist and presented him as the only source for the more than 130 death threats signed "NSU 2.0," which were sent to lawyers, artists, investigative journalists, leaders of religious communities and leading politicians. However, it was never clarified how the man managed to obtain the private information about his victims from police sources.

Following the arrest of the alleged lone wolf, Beuth provided the police with a clean bill of health. "According to everything that we know today, no police officer in Hesse was ever responsible for the 'NSU 2.0' series of death threats," he asserted at the time. The entire police in Hesse can "take a deep breath." It only took another four weeks before the next neo-Nazi group within the ranks of the Hesse state police was uncovered.

But Hesse is merely the tip of the iceberg. The WSWs has reported in detail about the right-wing extremist terrorist networks in the military, intelligence agencies and the

police, which grouped around figures like the army officers Franco A. and Andre S., who had the alias "Hannibal." Hannibal's prepper network, which had members across Germany, allegedly operated "safe houses" in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and prepared with weapons and kill lists for a civil war on "Day X," according to witness testimony and chat group messages.

While Franco A. is currently in court in Frankfurt, Hannibal is a free man. The Böblingen district court merely convicted him of violating firearms and explosives regulations, gave him a 60-day sentence and removed his firearms permit. He was also never laid off by the army prior to the ending of his term of service as a soldier. The state prosecutor also refused to investigate his group as a terrorist organisation.

The right-wing extremist networks in the state apparatus, and their concealment by the executive and judicial branches, recall the Weimar Republic, when terrorist groups like the Consul Organisation, with close ties to the highest echelons of the state, could murder and spread terror at will, and played an important role in the rise of the Nazis.

These developments have the same source. The obscene enrichment of a tiny minority, while the vast majority can hardly make ends meet, the avoidable deaths of tens of thousands due to the "profits before lives" policy in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the return to rearmament, militarism and war are incompatible with democratic rights. This is why the ruling elite in Germany and around the world is increasingly resorting to dictatorship and fascism.

The right-wing extremist networks have close ties to the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). Maximilian Tischer, a personal friend and accomplice of Franco A., works for the AfD deputy Jan Nolte and has access to parliament. The AfD, in turn, is being promoted by all the other parties and has its origins in them. Alexander Gauland, the political leader of the AfD, held senior positions in the state during his 40-year career as a CDU member in Hesse. Between 1987 and 1991 he headed the state chancellery of Minister President Walter Wallmann and was responsible for the Hesse intelligence agency.

The suppression of the far-right threat requires an independent movement of the working class, which links the struggle against fascism, militarism and social inequality with a socialist programme to overturn capitalism.



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