

# “Fridays for Future” climate protest leaders back German war drive

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The tenth global climate strike organized by “Fridays for Future” took place under conditions in which the danger of a nuclear war between Russia and the NATO powers is greater than ever before, because all parties involved are acting with extreme recklessness. Anyone who takes the fight against climate change seriously must do everything possible to prevent such a war and to fight against the rearmament of the German army and against fuelling the conflict with arms deliveries and trade sanctions.

But while the participants in the demonstrations were concerned about the development of war and want to prevent a nuclear world war, the self-proclaimed leaders of “Fridays for Future” are doing exactly the opposite. They are trying to turn the movement into a group of cheerleaders for NATO’s rearmament and aggression and to put it at the service of the drive to war. This must be prevented at all costs!

The Green politician Luisa Neubauer, who plays a leading role in the movement, expresses this despicable right-wing policy most sharply. Neubauer not only supports the arming of the Ukrainian military—in whose ranks neo-Nazis and far-right legionnaires from all over the world are fighting—but also the historically unprecedented rearmament of the German army and the war sanctions against Russia.

Thus, just a few days after the reactionary invasion of Ukraine by Russian troops, she already supported the delivery of arms to the war zone and declared: “Weapons alone are not enough.” In an interview with the *taz* newspaper, she added one day before the demonstrations that it was “logical that military spending should also be discussed.” However, one must “look at the big picture” and finally implement climate protection measures that “now also make sense from the logic of war.”

Neubauer told television channel NTV that she supported rearmament and stated that the switch to

renewable energy would serve the same political goals. “The political will to say that we are investing €100 billion in the military is there,” she stated. However, “The political will to say that we are now properly upgrading our energy systems” is just as necessary. After all, the “abandonment of fossil fuels” as a result of the upgrading is “ultimately a security policy issue.”

Neubauer has made it abundantly clear that her demands have nothing to do with human rights or the sanctioning of war criminals. She justified the efforts of Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action Robert Habeck to enter into new strategic energy partnerships with Qatar and the United Arab Emirates as a necessary “detour” on the path to more climate protection. Neubauer is also promoting Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel, who is financed by Saudi Arabia, among others, as a role model.

All three regimes are outright dictatorships and key players in the war of aggression against Yemen, which, according to the United Nations, has already killed 377,000 people since 2015 and currently threatens 19 million more with starvation.

Neubauer and the leadership of “Fridays for Future” are demanding an embargo against all coal, oil and gas supplies from Russia. An open letter to Germany’s Federal Government—signed, among others, by activists Neubauer, Carla Reemtsma and Pauline Brünger—demands that “the tap be turned off for the Russian leadership” and thus “the effect of the sanctions that have rightly been imposed on the Russian Central Bank” strengthened.

A “further rise in energy prices” and other expected “major effects,” the signatories said, “should be worth accepting for our freedom, security and the lives of the people of Ukraine.” Official appeals by Fridays for Future also called for an immediate “ban on imports of coal, oil and gas from Russia” and appealed to “world leaders” to “go beyond the words and declarations of support for

Ukraine.”

There is no doubt that an energy embargo in the midst of a pandemic, inflation and war would have devastating consequences for workers in Russia, Ukraine and around the world. Oil and natural gas account for two-thirds of Russia’s exports and about half of its government revenue. Russia, whose economy has grown by an average of only 0.3 percent per year since 2014, would be faced with the alternative of “nuclear war or economic subjugation” by such a multi-billion-dollar trade war measure.

The policy of economic sanctions and trade wars does not correspond to the logic of climate protection—i.e., the maintenance of a viable biosphere—but to the logic of a nuclear world war. Over the past 30 years, the imperialist powers of the NATO alliance have bombed several countries to pieces, killing well over a million people. They have systematically and purposefully encircled Russia and China and are now preparing for a third world war. The leadership of Fridays for Future supports this and is silent about these crimes.

Contrary to the claims of the protest leaders and the Western governments, the current murderous proxy war in Ukraine was also planned by the NATO powers and deliberately provoked over recent years. The calculation of Western military strategists consisted in using the population of the impoverished former Soviet Republic as a pawn to prepare a “Russian Afghanistan” for the Kremlin.

The reactionary and criminal invasion of Ukraine by the Putin regime is an expression of the historic bankruptcy of Russian nationalism—but not the cause of the war. The invasion divides the working class and plays into the hands of the NATO powers, which have been striving for decades to crush and subdue Russia. The Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) explained this historical and political background in detail in a recent video.

German militarism regards the war in Ukraine as a long-awaited pretext for carrying out a historically unprecedented rearmament programme and enforcing its own economic interests all over the world. This is also the reason why the demand for an embargo against Russia was enthusiastically received by important sections of the ruling class.

By taking the side of the government in the midst of the war, the leaders of the Fridays for Future protest movement show that they are not having the slightest impact on climate protection—unless they want to stop

global warming through a nuclear winter. To make a career with the Greens and other bourgeois parties and organizations, these people are willing to take advantage of the fears and concerns of millions of young people and spread disgusting war propaganda.

A more appropriate slogan for a “climate movement” that speaks of an economic strangulation of the second-largest nuclear-armed power would be “Fridays for Nuclear War.” It is therefore high time to take stock and build a real movement against climate change and war that is not guided by the predatory interests of imperialist geopolitics, but by the principles of the international class struggle.

Such a movement must inevitably be directed against capitalism and must not associate itself with any nation, let alone with a war-mongering imperialist alliance. What is needed is a struggle against the NATO powers, which have plundered the planet and its people for decades and are pushing human civilization to the brink of annihilation.

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) has declared that the fight against nuclear war and climate change—as well as the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic—is inextricably linked to the fight for international socialism and is inconceivable without a democratic and rationally planned global economy. The right-wing pro-war propaganda spread by the official leaders of the climate movement confirms this once again.

The international working class, we declared, must be mobilized on an internationalist and socialist program in order to take political power and put the enormous productive forces—corporations, banks and wealth—at the service of their social, economic and ecological interests. As a youth organization of the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI), the IYSSE is fighting for such a socialist perspective. The construction of this movement now assumes the greatest urgency.



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