

German-European war plans: Politicians and media rejoice over Macron's election victory

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The re-election of Emmanuel Macron as French president has triggered a mixture of jubilation and relief among German politicians.

On the very evening of the election, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democratic Party, SPD) wrote on Twitter: “Félicitations, hearty congratulations, dear President Emmanuel Macron. Your voters have also sent a strong message of commitment to Europe today. I am happy that we will continue our good cooperation!”

Leading representatives in government and opposition expressed similar sentiments. “I’m sure it’s not just me who feels a load off my mind right now. Félicitations, Président Emmanuel Macron & my colleague J. Denormandie!” said the Green Minister for the Environment, Cem Özdemir.

SPD leader Saskia Esken wrote: “I’m dancing! Great relief and our warmest congratulations to Emmanuel Macron and our French friends!”

Liberal Democratic Party (FDP) leader and German Finance Minister Christian Lindner described Macron’s victory as a “direction-setting election,” meaning “the united Europe is the biggest winner of this election. Vive la France, vive l’Europe.”

Apart from the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), whose leader Tino Chrupalla congratulated “our partner Marine Le Pen”, the opposition parties also joined in the chorus.

Christian Democratic Union (CDU) leader Friedrich Merz declared that with Macron, “Europe has also won today”. And the Thuringia State Premier Bodo Ramelow (Left Party) cheered: “The election of President Macron is good for Europe and the Franco-German relationship. Congratulations President Emmanuel Macron.”

Politicians and the media justify their mantra of support for Macron with their supposed opposition to nationalism and right-wing extremism. “The normalisation of extremist discourse in the French election campaign is a warning,” cautioned Green Party leader Omid Nouripour on Twitter, for example. It was now necessary to “stand up for democracy and freedom with all our strength and defend our

European values”.

All of this is patently absurd. In fact, Macron has increasingly adopted and implemented the programme of the far right over the last five years. Macron’s interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, a sympathiser of the far-right Action Française, pushed through discriminatory laws against Muslim associations and publicly criticised Le Pen for being too “soft” on Islam.

Macron himself called Nazi collaborator Philippe Pétain a “great soldier” and repeatedly mobilised the notoriously right-wing French police against the “yellow vests,” protesting students and striking workers. In the pandemic, the “president of the rich” pursued a herd immunity policy of deliberate mass infection in the interests of the financial markets. He deported refugees en masse and in foreign policy pursued militarism and war.

In Germany, the same parties that are now celebrating Macron are also pursuing an extreme right-wing programme. Since coming to power last November, the “traffic light” coalition of SPD, FDP and Greens has steadily intensified social austerity, stepped up the powers of the state, massively rearmed the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) and implemented a strict herd immunity policy. It has ended all protective measures against COVID-19 and intensified the state crackdown on the left.

Putin’s reactionary invasion of Ukraine was immediately used by the government as a pretext for tripling Germany’s military budget, the biggest rearmament spending since Hitler. Eighty years years after the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Berlin is again waging war against Russia in Ukraine—with all the tragic consequences. Politicians and the media are engaged in an anti-Russian witch hunt reminiscent of the darkest times in German history.

It is precisely these martial ambitions that lie behind German support for Macron. Since 2014 at the latest, the ruling class has openly pursued the goal of militarising Europe under German leadership in order to pursue its global geostrategic and economic interests. As a supporter of the European Union and a more independent European

foreign policy, Macron is seen as an ally in the implementation of the German-European great power offensive.

Significantly, a recent commentary in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ) is entitled, “In Paris sits a partner with guts.” It celebrates Macron for “not seeking his salvation in tactical Euroscepticism” despite the large number of “malcontents” in the French electorate. Rather, Macron “had the guts to promote the EU as a solution to the problems of globalisation, both the material and in terms of identity.”

But now the French president and the EU must also “deliver”. And that would “not be possible without Chancellor Olaf Scholz” and the “turning point in foreign policy” he had announced. The FAZ’s hope: “If Scholz were to succeed in making Germany a pillar of European sovereignty in military and political terms, then the Franco-German motor would gain some traction.”

A look at the so-called “Strategic Compass for Security and Defence” shows what this means in concrete terms. The document, adopted by the European Council on 21 March, reads like a blueprint for a more independent European war policy. In an era of “strategic competition” and “major geopolitical shifts,” it must be a matter of “defending our interests,” it says in the introduction.

What follows is a catalogue of military and security measures that would transform Europe into a veritable war union, capable of military intervention even independently of the USA and NATO. “We must be able to act rapidly and robustly whenever a crisis erupts, with partners if possible and alone, if necessary,” the document says.

“To that end,” the EU will 1) Reinforce its “civilian and military CSDP [Common Security and Defence Policy] missions and operations,” 2) “Develop an EU Rapid Deployment Capacity that will allow us to swiftly deploy up to 5,000 troops into non-permissive environments ...” and 3) strengthen “our command-and-control structures, in particular the Military Planning and Conduct Capability.”

To achieve the necessary war capabilities, the EU members commit themselves to “spend more and better in defence” and on massive rearmament. Among other things, the aim is to “jointly develop cutting-edge military capabilities” in all operational areas, “such as high-end naval platforms, future combat air systems, space-based capabilities and main battle tanks.”

Some of these projects are already being pushed through. For example, the total €100 billion “Special Assets of the Bundeswehr” measure provides for spending of about €34 billion on “multinational armament projects.” These include Franco-German mega-projects such as the new European Future Combat Air System (FCAS) and the Franco-German

Main Ground Combat System (MGCS).

In the election campaign, Le Pen had threatened to cancel these projects and called Germany “the absolute negative of French strategic identity.” Franco-German tensions have objective causes and will also intensify under Macron, but the ruling class in Germany hopes to continue the collaboration as long as possible and use it for its own rearmament plans.

A recent commentary in *Der Spiegel* headlined, “How I learned to love the bomb,” openly calls for German nuclear weapons and participation in France’s “Force de frappe”—also against the background of growing tensions with the USA.

“In terms of security, we are more dependent on the USA than we are on Russia in terms of energy,” complains author and former editor-in-chief of *Bild Zeitung* Nikolaus Blome. That was why time is pressing. “If Putin stays in office and Trump wins the next US election,” he says, “the Bundeswehr will be largely on its own by the end of 2024.” Because Trump “would not risk a nuclear war for Germany or Europe, let alone wage one.”

Blome’s apocalyptic conclusion: Berlin must be able to do this itself! It should “not remain unthinkable that Germany arms itself with nuclear weapons. That it and France should stretch a joint nuclear umbrella over the EU.” From Macron comes the phrase, “‘L’Europe qui protège’, a ‘Europe that protects’,” he adds cynically. The expression already fitted during the coronavirus pandemic and now fitted “even better because of Putin.... for a long time, even better.”

Such pathologically bellicose comments throw light on the essentially criminal character of the ruling class and its social system. It has already sacrificed millions of lives to capitalist profit in the pandemic—more than 135,000 of them in Germany. Now it is prepared to risk the survival of all humanity in a nuclear third world war. The only way to prevent this catastrophe is the independent mobilisation of the working class based on a socialist programme.



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