

German government sets course for world war as it backs Pelosi's Taiwan visit

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The visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan threatens to trigger a direct military confrontation between the US and China and thus the danger of a third world war. Nevertheless, leading representatives of Germany's federal government are defending Pelosi's trip and are pushing for a more aggressive course against Beijing.

The chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the German parliament (Bundestag), Michael Roth (Social Democrats, SPD), told the Bayern media group's newspapers, "This visit is neither aggressive nor provocative. Otherwise, the government in Taipei would not have issued an invitation, because the Taiwanese know best what endangers their interests and security."

He then demanded that Germany, despite its close economic ties with China, should prepare for a confrontation. Beijing "is currently observing very closely how determinedly we are reacting to Russian aggression against Ukraine. An escalation of the China-Taiwan conflict would affect almost all of our supply chains." It is "high time that we reduce our strategic dependencies on China as quickly as possible and diversify our supply chains," he continued.

The foreign policy spokesman of the Free Democratic Party parliamentary group, Ulrich Lechte, expressed himself similarly. It is "very welcome that Nancy Pelosi was not impressed by Beijing's attempts at intimidation." A "forced union according to Xi's view" must not be "tolerated." Therefore, "open support for democratic Taiwan is indispensable." In addition, "one should consider whether a German high representative could also carry out a visit. A member of the German government in Taipei—why not?!"

In fact, Lechte's party colleague Nicola Beer visited Taiwan ahead of Pelosi, from July 19 to 21. As vice president of the European Parliament, Beer is a high-ranking official in the European Union. Not surprisingly, she described Pelosi's visit as "completely correct" and threatened: "I believe that the Chinese government only understands a firm stance, especially against the background of the domestic political situation."

Beer failed to explain what she meant by this. Would she propose to provide Taiwan with military support in the event of a military conflict and—as in the NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine—to flood the country with weapons? Or

should Germany even intervene directly in the war and go to war with China alongside Taiwan? In any case, the consequences would be catastrophic.

Washington's offensive, aimed at subjugating the former semi-colony of China and securing the supremacy of US imperialism throughout the Asia-Pacific region, is bringing the world to the brink of a third world war that could mark the end of humanity. When Pelosi arrived in Taipei, an American aircraft carrier group led by USS Ronald Reagan maneuvered off the east coast of Taiwan, equipped with fighter jets, combat helicopters and other weapon systems. More warships are on their way to the region.

China, which regards Pelosi's visit as an attack on the "One China" policy, has reacted sharply to the US provocation. The Chinese People's Liberation Army began maneuvers in six maritime areas around Taiwan. By Sunday, there will also be "far-reaching live fire exercises." According to the Taiwanese Ministry of Defense, 27 Chinese fighter jets entered the Taiwanese no-fly zone after Pelosi's arrival.

Some sections of the ruling class have responded uneasily to these developments. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) foreign policy expert Norbert Röttgen described "China's threatening gestures towards Nancy Pelosi's visit" as "completely unacceptable." Nevertheless, "now is the wrong time for Pelosi to visit Taiwan. There are currently more than enough international tensions due to the Russian war of aggression." In this situation, "Pelosi's visit has a purely symbolic meaning."

In other words, Röttgen, one of the most aggressive warmongers against Russia, fears that the imperialist powers are not yet prepared to take on Russia and China militarily at the same time.

The ruling class is also aware of the enormous impact that the war policy is having on the export-dependent and energy-dependent German economy. Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock (Greens) recently warned that popular uprisings could emerge if Russia stops supplying gas to Germany. A collapse of economic relations with China would also have potentially revolutionary implications. Although foreign trade with China is currently growing less rapidly than with the US, the People's Republic was Germany's most important trading

partner for the sixth consecutive year in 2021.

In spite of this, the federal government is resorting to confrontation. Similar to the war in Ukraine, Berlin also sees the conflict with China as an opportunity to advance its long-cherished plans for rearmament and its great power ambitions. Baerbock made no secret of this during her current trip to North America.

“We do not accept the breaching of international law and when a larger neighbour attacks its smaller neighbour in violation of international law—and of course this also applies to China,” she blustered in New York on Monday, where she attended a conference on the review of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

On Tuesday, she used a keynote speech at the New School for threats against Russia and, above all, China. Beijing is a “competitor and systemic rival.” When the “rules-based international order ... is questioned in Europe and beyond,” this must be “taken very seriously.” She added, “We have painfully learned over the past months, with February 24th, that aggressive rhetoric can turn into dangerous action. China’s comments with regard to Taiwan raise serious questions.”

All this turns reality on its head. In fact, the NATO powers—especially the US and Germany—are the aggressors in world politics. They have been waging war almost continuously for 30 years, destroying entire countries, killing millions of people and turning tens of millions into refugees. Russia and China were systematically encircled with the aim of weakening and militarily subjugating these resource-rich and geostrategically important countries.

Putin’s invasion of Ukraine on February 24 was a desperate and reactionary response by the capitalist Russian regime to the imperialist war offensive in Europe, which continues to escalate. At the last NATO summit at the end of June, a new NATO strategy was adopted which explicitly focuses the military alliance on a military confrontation with the nuclear-armed powers Russia and China. This is not about “peace” and “democracy,” but imperialist interests.

Baerbock admitted this explicitly. “It cannot be in our interest if China is creating excessive economic dependencies in its region,” she said. Her ministry is currently developing “our own China strategy, which will be published next year, and which is very much in line with strategic thinking here in the U.S.”. In her view, “one objective of this strategy should be to further align transatlantic positions on the challenges China poses to our rules-based international order.”

What this means is clear. Germany should not only play a central role in the war against Russia, but also against China. Baerbock’s speech was an all-out militaristic tirade. It underlined the extent to which the former pacifists of the Greens and the wealthy middle classes they speak for have become the most aggressive representatives of German militarism.

“Germany has set up a special fund of 100 billion euro to

strengthen our military”, Baerbock boasted. “We have reversed a decades-old arms export paradigm, with Germany now being one of Ukraine’s strongest military and financial backers. And we have expanded our contributions to NATO: We are leading the NATO battle group in Lithuania and are assigning a brigade with up to 800 troops which can be deployed there if required. We are helping to secure the airspace over the Baltic States with our fighter jets – and to protect Slovakia with Patriot air defense.”

She continued, “But we know that we cannot stop here: Our aim is to further strengthen the European pillar of NATO, because we want to have a leadership in European and US partnership. Europe matters – also security... If that premise is to hold, we have to prove it and see it through in the long term. That means building a more strategic European Union – a Union able to approach the United States at eye level: in a partnership in leadership.”

Baerbock’s declared aim is to build an aggressive European military machine under German leadership. “European Union member states are spending dozens of billions every year on their militaries – but we get too little for that money. Because, for example, we Europeans are using more than a dozen types of tanks,” complained Baerbock. “The EU needs to become a stronger security provider with more integrated defense industries, with military missions able to stabilize regions in its neighborhood.”

Baerbock’s German-European war fantasies are as insane and aggressive as Washington’s world power plans. In both cases, the insanity has objective causes. Behind the imperialist warmongering lies a toxic mixture of geopolitical desires and a deep internal crisis. As in the 1930s, the ruling class is reacting to the collapse of capitalism with a turn towards militarism, fascism and war. The working class must oppose this dangerous development with its own strategy of world socialist revolution.



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