

Large-scale raid against right-wing terrorist network reveals the extent of the fascist danger in Germany

Peter Schwarz
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One of the largest police raids in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany took place on Wednesday. Around 3,000 officers from the special police forces stormed 137 locations in 11 federal states on Wednesday morning and arrested 25 people. Another 27 people are being investigated. The state prosecutor has accused them of being members or supporters of a terrorist organisation, and the searches are ongoing.

“The arrested accused belong to a terrorist organisation founded at the end of November 2021 at the latest that aimed to overturn the existing state order in Germany and replace it with its own form of government,” said a statement by the Federal state prosecutor. “The members of the organisation are aware that this project can only be realized through the use of military means and violence against state representatives. This includes the commission of homicide.”

It was not Nazis with bald heads and boots who were arrested, but members of high society. Prince Reuss Heinrich XIII was charged by the federal state prosecutor as the ringleader. Prince Reuss is a Frankfurt real estate agent and descendant of a Thuringian noble family who ruled the Vogtland region for 700 years, while another leading suspect is the former paratrooper commander Rüdiger v. P., who led the organisation’s “military arm.”

Among the detainees are also a lawyer with a doctorate, a doctor, a pilot, a classical tenor, the Berlin judge and former member of parliament for the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) Birgit Malsack-Winkemann, as well as other former elite soldiers, including the former elite special forces (KSK) Colonel Maximilian E. The locations searched included the barracks of the KSK in Calw, Baden-Württemberg, which was already a centre of the right-wing terrorist Hannibal network.

The state prosecutor accused the terrorist network, which it identified as part of the Reichsbürger (citizens of the Reich) milieu and advocate of QAnon ideology, of concrete coup plans and advanced military preparations. These charges were based on investigations by the Federal Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BKA), which has been monitoring and intercepting the communications of the accused since the beginning of September, with the involvement of several hundred officers. Accounts were also screened and chat groups monitored.

According to the federal state prosecutor, a “council” chaired by

Reuss “has regularly met in secret since November 2021 to plan the intended takeover of power in Germany and the establishment of its own state structures.” Reuss was to be the future head of state, and other members were to be responsible for various ministries, including “justice,” “external affairs” and “health.”

The “council” was affiliated with the “military arm,” some of whose members had “actively served in the military (Bundeswehr) in the past.”

“This part of the association is responsible for enforcing the planned seizure of power by force of arms,” noted the prosecutor. This was to be done “via a system already under construction, known as ‘Homeland Security Companies.’”

The leading staff of the “military wing,” headed by Rüdiger v. P., “dealt with, among other things, the recruitment of new members, the procurement of weapons and other equipment, the establishment of an interception-proof communication and IT structure, the conducting of shooting exercises and plans for the future accommodation and catering of the ‘Homeland Security Companies.’” The “focus of the recruitment efforts” was “especially on members of the Bundeswehr and police.” Several meetings were held in the summer of 2022 to implement this objective.

According to the previous investigations, “there is also a suspicion that individual members of the association have made concrete preparations to forcefully penetrate the German Bundestag (federal parliament) with a small armed group.” The coup attempt by Donald Trump on January 6, 2021 clearly served as a model.

Politicians and the media celebrated the raid against the terrorist network as the triumph of a “democracy on guard” (Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann of the Free Democratic Party) and a successful “commitment to the protection of our democracy” (Minister of the Interior Nancy Faeser of the Social Democratic Party).

The right-wing daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* regarded the blow against the group as “a sign that accusations that the security forces are blind to right-wing threats are absurd.” Apart from this, the newspaper sought to evade the issues. “Taking these people seriously would be too much of an honor,” wrote FAZ Editor Jasper von Altenbockum. “Despite the monstrous intentions of the group around ‘Heinrich XIII P.R.’ we should retain a sense

of proportion. The conspirators lacked any basis for success,” he continued.

In reality, the group’s activities underscore how much the far right and its ideology have penetrated the state apparatus and ruling circles, which work to conceal the fascist threat.

The claim that the group was formed only a year ago is simply not credible. Its connections to the AfD, the Reichsbürger milieu and terrorist groups such as the Hannibal Network, which the security forces left largely intact despite detailed journalistic exposures, are too obvious.

Hans-Georg Maassen, who advised and protected the AfD and shared its xenophobic ideology, headed Germany’s secret service for eight years. The National Socialist Underground trio was able to kill its victims undisturbed for years, while its members were surrounded by intelligence agents. The murderer of Kassel regional President Walter Lübcke came from the NSU milieu and was known to the authorities as a criminal right-wing extremist.

Even the presumed ringleader of the uncovered group is no stranger. The intelligence agencies have considered the prince from Vogtland to be part of the Reichsbürger milieu for years. “His speeches were saturated with anti-Semitic, anti-democratic and conspiratorial statements,” writes *Die Zeit*.

In 2019, Reuss gave a highly acclaimed lecture at the Zurich Worldwebforum, which made him the star of the far-right milieu. He accused the Jewish Rothschild family of having financed wars and revolutions to eliminate monarchies. The aim of the First World War was, among other things, to “promote the spread of the Jewish population,” according to Reuss.

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Reuss is suspected of having financed the right-wing terrorist group. In 1998, he auctioned off antiques, furniture, jewelry and paintings worth 3.5 million marks, which had been restored to the noble family following the end of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Reuss also filed numerous lawsuits for the restitution of real estate, palaces, forestry and agricultural property to the feudal ruling family, but lost all of them.

The case of Birgit Malsack-Winkemann shows particularly clearly how the judiciary and security forces protect right-wing extremists. The judge at the Berlin Regional Court joined the AfD in 2013 and was elected to the Bundestag in 2017. When she lost her mandate in 2021 and returned to the judiciary, the Berlin judicial administration first tried to remove her from service. But the Judicial Service Court ruled in favour of the reappointment of the right-wing extremist.

On October 13, 2022, long after the BKA had begun investigating Malsack-Winkemann’s involvement in the formation of a terrorist organisation, the judges ruled, according to the press statement of the court: “The transfer of a judge to retirement requires a serious impairment of the administration of justice, which cannot be ascertained here. ... Public confidence in the person of the judge must have been damaged to such an extent that the case law of the judge no longer appears credible; remaining in office must also have affected public confidence in an independent and unbiased judiciary. There were not sufficient facts for this conclusion.”

The judges were also not impressed by the fact that Malsack-Winkemann maintained contact with the far-right “Wing” faction of the AfD, made racist statements about refugees, and participated in the Berlin “lateral thinkers” demonstration against COVID-19 public health measures in August 2020, during which far-right forces occupied the entrance to the Bundestag.

The court described the racist hate speech against migrants as a slip of the tongue, explains the legal scholar Andreas Fischer-Lescano on the “Constitutional blog.” “Just because of the ‘xenophobic attitude’ that emerges in these statements (the court avoids the word racism), ‘it cannot be concluded in any case that the respondent’s attitude is anti-constitutional,’” writes Fischer-Lescano, quoting from the judicial ruling.

The Judicial Service Court is part of the Berlin Administrative Court, which rejected the Socialist Equality Party’s lawsuit against the Federal Ministry of the Interior in November 2021. The SEP had demanded that the secret service remove it from its annual report and stop defaming it as a “left-wing extremist” organisation and monitoring it with the secret service.

The court justified its decision against the SEP on the grounds that its demand for “an egalitarian, democratic and socialist society” was contrary to Germany’s Basic Law. This ruling could not have more clearly shown the court’s right-wing and authoritarian attitude. The AfD’s far-right politics and racism are compatible with the Constitution, but the demand for a democratic and socialist society is not!

Ultimately, the ruling class’ shift towards far-right authoritarian forms of rule, which is also evident in Italy, the US and many other countries, is a reaction to the deep crisis of the capitalist system. Just as they did 90 years ago, the rulers are responding to the intensification of social tensions and the growth of the class struggle with militarism and dictatorship. As they work with fascist forces in Ukraine to wage their proxy war against Russia, they systematically build up far-right networks in the state apparatus to suppress any resistance to their right-wing policies from below.

The arrest of two dozen right-wing extremists does not change that. In the Weimar Republic, too, the state rapped the Nazis on the knuckles from time to time. But when the situation worsened in 1933, all the bourgeois parties voted for Hitler’s Enabling Act. Only an independent, socialist offensive by the working class can stop the rise of the far right.



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