

Seymour Hersh's latest revelation: Why is German Chancellor Scholz covering up the destruction of Nord Stream by the US?

Johannes Stern
27 March 2023

The *World Socialist Web Site* described the meeting between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and US President Joe Biden as a war summit, at the beginning of March. “There is no way to avoid the conclusion that the purpose of the summit was to review with and obtain from Scholz his explicit signed approval for a massive escalation of the US-NATO war against Russia,” we wrote in a comment. This assessment was undoubtedly correct. Since the meeting, the NATO powers have been pushing the war offensive ever more aggressively.

But the meeting had another, sinister component. On Wednesday, the US investigative journalist Seymour Hersh reported that Scholz and Biden also covered up the background of the attack on the Nord Stream pipelines on September 26, 2022.

Hersh revealed in an explosive report in February that the US government was responsible for the destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines, which it systematically planned and carried out. A few days after the Biden-Scholz summit, leading German and American media reported, citing intelligence, that a “pro-Ukrainian group” had destroyed the pipelines. The attack was carried out by six people from a yacht chartered by a company owned by Ukrainian businessmen.

The narrative that the operation was carried out independently of the US and other powers was implausible from the outset. “It is ridiculous to think that Ukrainians operating from Germany could carry out a massive, highly complex and international underwater terrorist attack that simultaneously destroyed four different pipelines without the knowledge of the Ukrainian government, Germany or the United States,” the WSWs wrote.

Hersh ~~host~~ ~~explained~~ “The a Cover American and German intelligence agencies launched the story to refute his own detailed report blaming Biden and the American government for the Nord Stream attacks. This is exactly what happened at the meeting between Biden and Scholz, which was held to the exclusion of the public. Hersh writes:

“There have been no statements or written understandings made public since then by either government, but I was told by someone with access to diplomatic intelligence that there was a discussion of the pipeline exposé and, as a result, certain elements in the Central Intelligence Agency were asked to prepare a cover story in collaboration with German intelligence that would provide the American and German press with an alternative version for the destruction of Nord Stream 2. In the words of the intelligence community, the agency was ‘to pulse the system’ in an effort to discount the claim that Biden had ordered the pipelines’ destruction.”

Hersh does not disclose his source, and it is not possible to independently verify his report. However, Hersh is a renowned investigative journalist and Pulitzer Prize winner, and his previous revelations and reports—including the uncovering of the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War—have always been confirmed in retrospect.

If Hersh’s report is true, the German government not only knows that the US carried out the attack, but is also actively participating in its cover-up. And this despite the fact that the destruction of the pipelines was in fact an act of terrorism against German-European infrastructure and involves massive economic damage. Nord Stream could have supplied Germany and

Western Europe with relatively cheap Russian gas in the long term. The construction costs of the pipelines alone amounted to around €20 billion.

It is obvious that with the attack, the US aimed to make Europe more dependent on American natural gas imports and to bring it more under US control. In his recent article, Hersh points out that the destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines has led to a massive rise in natural gas prices. Although they have declined somewhat due to the mild winter, they are still “two to three times as high as before the crisis” and “more than three times as high as current US prices.”

How can it be explained that Scholz, the German intelligence services and a large part of the media are still working feverishly to cover up the background of the attack? Why are they ignoring Hersh’s latest report and waging a character assassination campaign against the famous journalist when they write about him? Behind this are deeply reactionary political goals and interests.

For one thing, Germany is now playing a leading role in NATO’s war. After initial hesitation, the German government is one of the largest arms suppliers in Ukraine and is preparing to supply hundreds of Marder and Leopard 1 and 2 tanks. “We deliver more than any other country in continental Europe,” Scholz boasted recently in his speech at the Munich Security Conference.

Berlin supports Washington’s war goal of defeating Russia militarily and installing a pro-Western puppet regime in Moscow. After the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague issued an arrest warrant against the Russian president last week, the German government immediately announced its willingness to implement it. “We are obliged to imprison President Putin if he enters German territory and to hand him over to the ICC,” said Federal Minister of Justice Marco Buschmann.

It is clear that disagreement with Washington would seriously weaken the NATO war offensive. Behind the scenes, however, the knives have long since been sharpened and the tensions between the imperialist powers are exploding. The German war aims go far beyond Ukraine and Russia. The ruling class is using the war in Ukraine to rearm itself as the leading European military power after two lost world wars and to aggressively enter the fight for the redivision of the

world. This will ultimately lead to an open conflict with the US—for which German imperialism is not yet prepared.

Another, no less explosive reason for the cover-up is the growing opposition of the population to the imperialist war policy. The US attack on the pipelines exposes the official propaganda that NATO is an alliance of democratic states fighting for freedom and human rights in Ukraine and around the world. In reality, it is concerned with predatory imperialist interests pursued by methods of terror and destruction.

Over the past three decades, the US-led imperialist powers have destroyed entire countries and killed millions of people in the Middle East (Iraq, Syria), Central Asia (Afghanistan), North Africa (Libya) and also in Europe (Serbia). Now they are waging war against the nuclear-armed power of Russia, preparing for a war against China and increasingly fighting among themselves—if necessary with the same military means.

“The demolition of the Nord Stream pipelines confirms that the US is not shying away from anything in pursuit of its imperialist goals,” the WSWS warned. “But their partners and rivals in Germany are in no way inferior to them. With the revival of German militarism, they are following more and more openly in the footsteps of the Wehrmacht and the Nazis, who committed the worst crimes in human history.

Hersh’s revelations are also a warning in this context. As in the past, imperialist warmongering on both sides of the Atlantic leads to disaster. It can only be stopped by building a powerful anti-war movement of the international working class that combines the struggle against war with the struggle against its root, capitalism. This is what the Socialist Equality Party and its sister parties of the Fourth International are fighting for in the US and worldwide.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact