

Former German foreign minister Joschka Fischer declares Ukraine war is “Global power struggle for future world order”

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The longer a war lasts, the more the initial propaganda fades and the real causes and goals become clearer. This is true for any prolonged war, including the current one in Ukraine. An article by former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer that appeared Monday in the online newspaper *The Pioneer* is telling in this regard.

Fischer repeats the standard propaganda that Russia is the sole aggressor and that the war came as a complete surprise to Europe on February 24, 2022, that “all the Europeans’ cherished illusions of peace ... shattered to the roar of exploding Russian bombs in Ukrainian towns and villages.” But then he gets down to business and explains bluntly what this war is really about: the imperialist domination of the United States and the major European powers over Russia, China and the “global South.”

The war in Ukraine was also “about the future world order, about its great revision in the 21st century,” Fischer writes. He accuses China and Russia of having “entered into an unformalized alliance to break the dominance of the United States and the West—the two great Eurasian powers against the transatlantic and also Pacific alliance of the West, led by the United States.” This is a “global power struggle based on the return of rival major global powers after the end of the Cold War,” he writes.

The so-called “global South” would also “play a major role in the emerging global conflict for dominance in the 21st century,” Fischer adds, noting regretfully that “many, especially of the major nations of the South, such as Brazil, India and South Africa, but also the Persian Gulf states, have refused to take a clear partisan stand and these are behaving strictly according to their national interests.” The “position of the West and its leading power America ... vis-à-vis these emerging states and regions” was “by no means hopeful.”

Fischer’s conclusion: the “West”—and especially Germany—must rearm and escalate the war to defend its “supremacy.” The “time of its endearing illusions of peace has definitely come to an end with February 24,” he writes.

“Europe will have to overcome its internal divisions and defencelessness as soon as possible and become a geopolitical power capable of defence and deterrence, including a very difficult-to-achieve European nuclear deterrent capability.”

The European Union must change its character: “The return of war to Europe forces the transformation of the economic community into a geopolitical power. The security of the continent will be at the centre for a long time to come—the EU as a defence community closely dovetailed with NATO and a geopolitical force, rather than predominantly as an economic community, a common market and a customs union.” He also says that the “commitment of candidate status for EU membership” offered to Ukraine, Turkey and the states of the Western Balkans, which was based on European security interests, was “primarily geopolitically motivated.”

At the same time, Fischer makes it clear that Germany should not rely on either the United States or France: “Because what will Europe [he always writes ‘Europe’ when he means Germany] do in the worst-case scenario if an isolationist is elected to the White House again in two years and Marie Le Pen is subsequently elected to the Élysée? Certainly, that would be a nightmare, but quite a realistic possibility.”

The former Green Party foreign minister knows what he’s talking about when he advocates building Germany into a geopolitical military power. In 1999, he had forced Germany’s participation in the NATO war against Yugoslavia—the first combat deployment of the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) since Hitler’s defeat in World War II—against fierce opposition from the ranks of his own Green Party. He then ensured the deployment of the Bundeswehr in Afghanistan and other wars.

It may be a coincidence, but it is significant that on the same day Fischer’s article appeared in *The Pioneer*, the trial of Hashim Thaçi began before a special war crimes tribunal

in The Hague. Then the spokesman for the Kosovo Liberation Army (UÇK), he was brought to the Rambouillet conference in 1999 by Fischer and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to construct a pretext for war against Yugoslavia. Later, he was NATO's point man in Kosovo, and after unilateral independence from Serbia he became prime minister and president.

Now, Thaçi is being charged with kidnappings, torture, and nearly a hundred murders committed by the UÇK at the time of the war. Other UÇK leaders have already been sentenced to long prison terms for these and other crimes.

That the UÇK was involved in political assassinations, ethnic cleansing and mafia crimes was known even then. Originally classified as a terrorist organization by the State Department, that changed when the US government needed it for its own interests.

Now the past has caught up with Thaçi, and his former patrons are making great efforts to protect him. He is being defended by a high-powered team of American lawyers, including Pierre-Richard Prosper, who was special envoy for war crimes prosecutions under President George W. Bush. NATO's top commander in the Yugoslav war, General Wesley Clark, will testify as a defence witness.

NATO fears a conviction of Thaçi will shed new light on the criminal nature of the Yugoslav war. "Since NATO cooperated with the UÇK in 1999, the question arises: is the prosecution claiming that NATO knowingly cooperated with a criminal enterprise?" noted Thaçi's lawyer Prosper.

It is now clear that the Yugoslav war was only the first step on the road to a German great power policy that does not stop at the risk of nuclear war. The war in Ukraine did not begin on February 24, 2022, but long before that with the Yugoslav war, the wars in Iraq, Libya and Syria, the systematic expansion of NATO toward the Russian border, and the US and German-backed Maidan coup of 2014 that installed a Western puppet regime in Kiev.

To be sure, the Russian attack on Ukraine is reactionary in every sense of the word. It is a bankrupt response by Russia's nationalist oligarch regime to being surrounded by NATO. But the main responsibility for the war lies with NATO itself, which is doing everything it can to escalate it further—even if it costs the lives of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian and Russian soldiers and risks nuclear war. The goal is the military defeat of Russia, the subjugation of that vast country, and the encirclement of China.

The coalition government in Berlin is using the war for the most massive rearmament offensive since Hitler. Germany has risen to become Ukraine's largest arms supplier after the United States; this year alone, German arms and munitions worth a billion euros are to flow into the war every month. The Bundeswehr is being built up into the most powerful

armed force in Europe, so that it can once again stand at the top in the "global power struggle for the future world order," as Joschka Fischer has openly stated.

At the same time, it is becoming increasingly difficult to conceal the fact that the pro-war policy is threatening to plunge Europe into an inferno once again, something an appeal signed by numerous leading social democrats and trade unionists openly states. "The shadow of nuclear war lies over Europe," it reads, warning that the world was slipping "into a new great war."

The appeal was initiated by historian Peter Brandt, son of the late German Chancellor Willy Brandt (Social Democratic Party, SPD), and former German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) chairman Reiner Hoffmann. It was signed by, among many others, former federal ministers Hans Eichel and Herta Däubler-Gmelin, former SPD chairman Norbert-Walter Borjans, ex-EU commissioner Günter Verheugen, former Bundestag (federal parliament) president Wolfgang Thierse and former union leaders Detlef Hensche (IG Druck) and Franz Steinkühler (IG Metall).

The fact that these worn-out politicians and functionaries, who have supported a pro-war policy for years and enjoy the best connections to government circles, are now openly warning of a nuclear war must be understood as an alarm signal. There is an urgent need to build an international anti-war movement of the working class and youth that combines the rejection of war with the struggle against its cause, capitalism. This is what the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party and its international youth organization, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, are fighting for.



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