

Left Party politician Sahra Wagenknecht publishes a militarist manifesto

Ulrich Rippert, Christoph Vandreier
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The *World Socialist Web Site* has already exposed Sahra Wagenknecht's "Stand Up for Peace" initiative and her plans to found a new party as a right-wing, militarist manoeuvre. Wagenknecht, a former leader of Germany's Left Party, is determined to channel widespread opposition to rearmament and the constant escalation of the Ukraine war into the reactionary channels of German nationalism. Anyone doubting her political orientation is advised to read her latest article in the right-wing Swiss newspaper, *Weltwoche*.

Under the headline, "My vision for Germany: peace, freedom, prosperity for all," Wagenknecht refrains from criticising the German government's war policy from the standpoint of anti-militarism, which is deeply rooted in the country's working population after the horrors of two world wars. On the contrary, Wagenknecht accuses the government of insufficient aggression in advancing the interests of German capitalism. Accordingly, she states it is high time to finally "put our own security and economic interests at the centre."

The measures she proposes all stem from the arsenal of economic warfare. German companies must be protected by trade restrictions from others seeking "access to domestic cutting-edge technology" and from the "destruction of important domestic capacities," Wagenknecht writes. With regard to Russia, "advantageous trade relations" should be established instead of imposing sanctions, without making oneself completely dependent on a foreign country. Finally, she says, Germany should enforce free trade where it serves the interests of large corporations, which she refers to in the language of the neo-liberal Free Democratic Party as "Mittelstand," i.e., middle-sized companies.

"We need an independent European foreign policy and a European economic strategy," she continues,

"with which we can position ourselves for the future" and "finally become sovereign in key areas." Germany cannot be content with the role of a "vassal," she fulminates, but must free itself from American dominance and become its own pole of power in a "multipolar world."

The last time Germany strove to attain great-power status, it destroyed an entire continent. Today the explosive power of an open conflict with the highly weaponised US over world domination would be much greater.

Wagenknecht's "Stand up for Peace" would lead to the third world war already threatened by the military policy of the German government. She criticises the NATO war against Russia because it harms German interests but is not opposed to militarism and the insane level of rearmament undertaken by the government aimed at enforcing German economic interests all over the world.

Former brigadier general Erich Vad was a co-organiser of the rally initiated by Sahra Wagenknecht and Alice Schwarzer, which took place in Berlin in February. Vad is a vehement advocate of massive rearmament and Germany adopting a more aggressive stance in Europe and the world. Wagenknecht is now clearly formulating the same militarist agenda.

Even the choice of newspaper in which she published her contribution is a political statement. *Weltwoche* is the unofficial organ of the xenophobic and far right populist Swiss People's Party (SVP). Roger Köppel, who has run and published the paper since 2001, sits in the Swiss parliament for the SVP.

Wagenknecht also leaves no doubt that she seeks to implement Germany's great-power offensive at the expense of workers. In this respect, her text is a clumsy plagiarism of the well-known corporate propaganda

usually associated with the FDP or the German Business Association BDI. Instead of any reference to “social equality” or “justice,” she refers to “prosperity,” defined as economic growth. “If the economy is doing well, everyone is doing well” is a popular slogan of the big corporations.

In fact, German companies are recording record profits while workers’ wages are being pummelled by inflation and hundreds of thousands are being made redundant. Millions of workers no longer know how to make ends meet, while billions flow into the vaults of the corporations and into rearmament. Wagenknecht’s reaction is to back the corporations with demands for cheaper raw materials and increased sales markets. For Wagenknecht, militarism abroad must be financed by attacks on workers’ rights and incomes at home.

Accordingly, she subordinates every aspect of social life to the profit interests of German corporations on the global market. A good education system is not a democratic right but should rather: “produce the necessary number of skilled workers and engineers.” She continues with her list of priorities: “efficient public administrations to speed up business start-ups... good infrastructure, intact roads, bridges and railways plus fast digital networks” aimed at improving just-in-time production and enabling online and AI control of factories and administrations.

The Left Party politician’s political orientation is most evident in her adoration for the French “president of the rich” Emmanuel Macron. “Macron gets it, Scholz doesn’t,” she declares with regard to an independent foreign policy, omitting the fact that the very same Macron is currently waging a war against the French working class to push through his hated pension cuts.

It is not only Wagenknecht’s “social policy” that meets with the approval of the German ruling class. Her call for an aggressive foreign policy against the United States also expresses the objective aspirations of the German elite. While they are currently hesitant about openly defying the US, knives are being sharpened behind the scenes.

The Left Party, in which Wagenknecht and her husband Oskar Lafontaine played a central role, provides the perfect breeding ground for this policy. Fierce nationalism is deeply rooted in the party’s DNA. Lafontaine is a former chairman of the SPD, the party

which has played a key role in propping up German imperialism in every crisis situation since its approval of the Kaiser’s war loans at the start of World War I. His partner, Wagenknecht, joined the ruling Stalinist SED in the dying days of former East Germany and, as chair of the Communist Platform of the PDS (forerunner of the Left Party), represented the most reactionary, nationalist positions of Stalinism.

The same nationalism is also the driving force behind the majority in the Left Party, which rejects Wagenknecht’s criticism of the war against Russia and backs the NATO offensive. Left Party leaders such as Janine Wissler and Klaus Lederer regard the war in Ukraine as a necessary steppingstone on Germany’s path to great-power status. Whether Wagenknecht stays in the party or founds a new one at the end of the year is in essence a dispute within the ruling class as to how best to conduct the war in the face of broad popular opposition.

The enormous shift to the right by all wings of this party is a reaction to the growing radicalisation of the working class. The privileged layers of the petty bourgeoisie and sections of the ruling class upon which the party relies feel threatened by the intensification of the class struggle and are increasingly calling for a police state and dictatorship.

This development confirms that a third world war can only be prevented by the independent mobilisation of the working class against capitalism. In every country, workers must rise up against their own warmongers and declare war on the capitalists. This is the programme of international socialism represented only by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI) and its German section, the Socialist Equality Party (SGP).



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