

Alternative for Germany positions itself as open fascist party for the 2024 European election

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The Alternative for Germany (AfD) is positioning itself as an openly fascist party for the European elections in June 2024. This is evident from the AfD's party congress in Magdeburg, which began last weekend and continues this weekend.

The party congress is dominated by its Thuringia state association leader and leader of the völkisch-nationalist "Flügel" ("Wing") Björn Höcke and his supporters. In their speeches and interviews, they outdid themselves with their aggressive nationalist, racist and militarist slogans and demands reminiscent of the darkest times in German history.

"This EU must die so that the real Europe can live!" declared Höcke, in a variation of the Nazi slogan: "Germany must live, and [even] if we have to die." Particularly loud applause erupted among the delegates when the Bulgarian right-wing extremist Kostadin Kostadinow referred positively in his greeting to the fact that Germany and Bulgaria were allies in the First and Second World Wars, shouting: "It is high time that your country takes its rightful place as a great power, and not only in Europe."

Unlike at previous party congresses, the open fascists not only set the tone in terms of content, but also provide the personnel. Thus, the top five candidates on the party slate are all assigned to the "Flügel," and the majority of the other ten candidates already elected are also there thanks to Höcke's grace.

The top candidate is the lawyer Maximilian Krah, whom even the *Verfassungsschutz* (domestic secret service), which is riddled with extreme right-wing forces, classifies as völkisch-nationalist, Islamophobic, xenophobic and "anti-constitutional."

Krah, who has been sitting in the European Parliament for the AfD since 2019, maintains close contacts with the neo-Nazi ideologue Götz Kubitschek and is an avowed follower of Hitler's crown jurist Carl Schmitt. In his own legal work, he represents Holocaust deniers, such as the dissident bishop Richard Williamson, and other right-wing extremists.

Krah is very well connected to the fascist scene in Europe. For example, he has employed French anti-Semite Guillaume Pradoura in his office since 2019, after he was expelled from

Marine Le Pen's Rassemblement National for an anti-Semitic cartoon. Krah defended the cartoon, saying, "The picture is not nice, but I can't see any wrongdoing in it."

The other AfD top candidates are cut from the same cloth as Krah.

In second place is Peter Bystron, a member of the Bundestag (federal parliament) who also gathers fascists and criminal elements around him in his office. In early 2021, Bystron's associate Dagmar S. was investigated for involvement in a Europe-wide far-right arms trafficking ring. In 2018, Bystron himself had taken part in shooting exercises with the white-nationalist Suidlanders during an official parliamentary trip to South Africa and provocatively described the far-right Afrikaner paramilitary group as "a civil society organisation."

Alexander Jungbluth (fifth position), a member of the right-wing extremist student fraternity the Raczeks, agitated against "kebab shops" and "Shisha bars" in Germany at a meeting of the AfD a few days before the party conference. To the approving growls of his far-right audience, he called for "a German culture in Germany, a French culture in France, an Italian culture in Italy."

In sixth place on the slate is Dr. Marc Jongen. Jongen is considered the "party philosopher" and "chief ideologue" of the AfD. In his fascist speeches in the Bundestag, he regularly refers to far-right Humboldt professor Jörg Baberowski ("Hitler was not vicious") in order to relativise the crimes of German imperialism in the Second World War and mock the victims of the Nazis.

Notorious immigrant-hater Irmhild Bossdorf was elected to the ninth place on the slate. In her speech at the party conference, she declared that the German people were being "abandoned to dissolution" by Brussels and Berlin. To the cheers of the delegates in Magdeburg, she shouted that the "solution" was "remigration, millions of remigrants"—a combat term of the far-right Identitarian movement. She said that one should not be afraid of "man-made climate change", but rather of "man-made population change."

Siegbert Droese (eleventh position) is also a long-standing member of the fascist "Flügel." In 2018, he described the

radical right-wing terror against immigrants, Jews, and leftists in Chemnitz as “understandable.” He reportedly used a blue AfD station wagon with the registration number L-AH1818—the initials of Adolf Hitler—in the 2016 federal election campaign.

The AfD and the fascist filth it represents are hated by the vast majority of the population, despite the party’s rising numbers—recent polls put it at around 22 percent. The fascists are able to behave so aggressively mainly because they have the increasingly active and direct support of the ruling class.

On Tuesday, it became known that the AfD received the largest donations of all Bundestag parties this year, €265,000. By comparison, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) received €216,000, the Liberal Democrats (FDP) €206,901, the Greens €201,001 and the chancellor’s party, the Social Democrats (SPD), €105,492.

A few days before the party conference, CDU leader Friedrich Merz had called for closer cooperation with the AfD at municipal level. Since then, there has been discussion within the political elite and the media about the extent to which the supposed “political firewall” against the AfD still stands. In fact, it never existed. The far-right party was a project of the ruling class from the very beginning.

A large part of its membership is recruited directly from the state apparatus (military, judiciary, or police) and/or was previously a member of an establishment party. The top candidates for the European elections are no exception. Kraus was a member of the CDU for more than 20 years before joining the AfD in 2016, Bistran comes from the FDP and René Aust, who was elected to third position, is a former SPD member.

At the municipal level, there has long been close cooperation with the fascists. This concerns not only the CDU and FDP, but also the nominally “left” parties. Only on Wednesday it became known that in the constituency of the Green Party leader Ricarda Lang in Baden-Württemberg, Green city councillors approved an AfD motion last year. In Hildburghausen in Thuringia, the SPD is in a pact with the AfD, and back in 2014, the Left Party formed one of the first parliamentary groups with the AfD in the municipal council of Muldestausee in Saxony-Anhalt.

Even at the state and federal level, there can be no question of a “firewall.” At the beginning of 2020, the CDU and FDP elected Thomas Kemmerich, a member of the FDP, as Thuringia’s state prime minister with the votes of the AfD. Only because of a public outcry was Kemmerich forced to resign, but the targeted strengthening of the AfD continued. Shortly after his re-election in Thuringia, the “left” Prime Minister Bodo Ramelow used his own vote to make AfD man Michael Kaufmann Vice-President of the Thuringia state parliament.

In the Bundestag itself, the establishment parties have been working closely with the far-right in the parliamentary committees since the AfD entered in 2017. Overall, these

parties have not only created the social, ideological and political conditions for the AfD’s rise in recent years and integrated it into the political system, they have also adopted large parts of its programme.

In addition to refugee and pandemic policy, this applies above all to war policy. Extreme militarism and the aggressive call for German leadership in Europe and the world are now part of the arsenal of all the establishment parties. The German government is systematically using NATO’s war offensive against Russia to implement the biggest rearmament since Hitler and, to the applause of the AfD, has set up a €100 billion special fund for the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces).

It says everything about the right-wing character of the establishment parties that the AfD—of all parties—is currently able to present itself as a “party of peace.” This is of course absurd. Behind its criticism of the NATO war against Russia lies the claim of German imperialism to act more independently of the US. NATO is being used “primarily in the US interest,” Höcke said in Magdeburg. Germany and Europe must “free themselves from the hegemonic grip of the US” and learn to “stand on their own two feet.”

There is a direct connection between the explosion of German militarism, the rise of the AfD and the sharp turn to the right of the entire political establishment. “As in the 1930s, war abroad means dictatorship and fascism at home,” the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) declares in its election appeal for the European elections.

And it stresses:

The only social force that can prevent another world war is the international working class—that is, the vast majority of the world’s population, which today is more numerous and more interconnected than ever before. Together with its sister parties in the Fourth International, the SGP is building a worldwide socialist movement against war and its cause, capitalism.

* Stop the NATO war in Ukraine! No sanctions and weapons deliveries!

* Two World Wars are enough! Stop the warmongers!

* €100 billion for day care centres, schools and hospitals instead of rearmament and war!



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