

Mass deportations and genocide in Gaza: German parties embrace the far-right AfD

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Germany's government and opposition parties routinely refer to a so-called "firewall" they have erected against the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD). In reality, such a wall never existed and insofar as they had some minor differences with the AfD, they are long since gone.

Nowhere is this more evident than in refugee policy. All the parties represented in the Bundestag—from the conservative CDU/CSU and the governing parties, the Social Democrats (SPD), the Greens, the neo-liberal FDP to the Left Party—have adopted the AfD's programme. The slogan "Foreigners out!" once reserved for skinheads and neo-Nazis, has become the battle cry of Germany's leading political circles.

On October 21, the weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* appeared with a cover picture of Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the headline: "We must finally deport on a grand scale." Since then, the hate campaign against refugees has been unceasing.

CDU deputy leader Jens Spahn has called for "irregular immigration movements" to be stopped "with physical force" when necessary and that boat refugees picked up in the Mediterranean be illegally returned "to the North African coast."

Then, on October 25, the German cabinet passed a "comprehensive legislative package for increased and faster repatriation" that combines inhumanity with sadistic cruelty. Asylum seekers without the right to stay, who have lived and worked here for years, can be taken from their beds without warning and abruptly locked away for up to 28 days before being forcibly deported. Police are allowed not only to search their accommodation and mobile phones, but also the accommodation of neighbours—all without permission.

The media reported it as if the future of Germany depended on the deportation of a few thousand

refugees. They are making the weakest of the weak the scapegoat for the crisis of Germany's municipalities, which have slashed social spending for decades. In fact, just a fraction of the 80 billion euros to be spent on rearmament in the coming year or the billions in profits made by Germany's leading companies would be enough to provide for all the refugees living in Germany.

The agitation against refugees is part of a comprehensive attack on basic democratic rights. The government, opposition and media are adopting the AfD's policies and thereby strengthening the position of this fascist party in order to intimidate and suppress any opposition to its war policies and social attacks.

The support of the German government and all the parties in the Bundestag for the Israeli government's campaign to starve and decimate 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza goes along with an unprecedented attack on the right to freedom of expression. Demonstrations in Germany expressing even the slightest sympathy for the Palestinians have been banned and violently dispersed by the police. Merely showing a Palestinian flag or wearing a Palestinian scarf is sufficient to be abused and arrested by the police. Jewish people who oppose the war crimes of the Netanyahu regime are also affected.

The CDU leader, Friedrich Merz, has demanded that only those who declare their support for Israel's security can become German citizens. "Anyone who does not agree to this has no business being in Germany," he said on German television. Merz wants to deprive Palestinian refugees any access to Germany on principle.

This policy has nothing to do with defending Jewish people. This is shown by the fact alone that the AfD, which is riddled with neo-Nazis and anti-Semites,

unreservedly backs the Israeli government. For Germany's ruling circles, the Middle East conflict is another front in a global war that is about nothing less than the redivision of the world.

For the past ten years Germany's ruling elite has openly declared an "end to military restraint" and pursued a new "great power" policy based on military strength. In the Ukraine war, it plays the leading role behind the US. It is sacrificing the lives of hundreds of thousands of young men in order to defeat Russia, divide up the country and bring its vast resources under German control.

In the Middle East, the US is deploying a massive war fleet, primarily directed against Iran. After 33 years of war, which has led to the devastation of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria, the US is making a new attempt to dominate the region. Germany is not prepared to stand on the sidelines and miss out on the spoils of war.

This insane policy, which threatens to lead directly to a nuclear third world war, is incompatible with democracy and is already meeting mass resistance worldwide. Every passing day reveals the genocidal nature of the war against the Palestinians. At the same time, there is growing resistance to the impact of the huge costs of the war, which are being passed on to the working people through wage cuts, layoffs and social cuts.

This is the reason why the establishment parties in Germany are now closing ranks, adopting the policies of the AfD and buttressing up such a despised party. Today they attack anyone who opposes the war being waged against the Palestinians, tomorrow they will attack anyone who opposes their social attacks.

The struggle against war, the defence of democratic rights and the resistance against the capitalist profit system are inseparably bound up. The growing movement against war must be united with the worldwide struggles of the working class. This requires, first and foremost, the building of the Fourth International and the Socialist Equality Parties as the socialist leadership in the working class.



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