

# German politicians and media attack Greta Thunberg for condemning the genocide in Gaza

Joshua Seubert  
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Truth and freedom of expression are always among the first casualties of imperialist war. While Israel is committing a massacre of the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip, bombing schools, places of worship, hospitals and other civilian infrastructure, any criticism of this is denounced as antisemitism and terrorism.

One of the most prominent victims of this hysterical campaign is the Swedish climate activist and initiator of the international Fridays for Future (FFF) movement, Greta Thunberg. In recent weeks, she has condemned Israel's crimes in numerous statements and at mass demonstrations organised by the climate movement.

"Today we are striking in solidarity with Palestine and Gaza," she declared a few days after the start of the Israelis mass murder in Gaza. "The world must raise its voice and demand an immediate ceasefire, justice and freedom for the Palestinians and all civilians affected."

Most recently, at a protest of around 85,000 climate protestors in Amsterdam, she called for "listening to the voices of those who are oppressed and who are fighting for peace and justice." When an elderly man on stage snatched the microphone from her hand and spoke out against Thunberg's political views, she chanted, "No climate justice on occupied land," and tens of thousands joined in.

Thunberg's clear statements against genocide and in favour of the oppressed Palestinians and the response she received reflect the widespread opposition, especially among young people, to militarism, imperialism and war.

The international umbrella organisation of Fridays for Future also published a statement on X/Twitter calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and

apartheid in Israel. It condemns the bourgeois media, whose propaganda has denounced as terrorism the resistance of Palestinians and any expression of solidarity with them, thereby promoting a sickening perpetrator-victim inversion.

In the ruling class, this clear denunciation of imperialist-Zionist genocide has provoked an aggressive smear campaign. The German government's antisemitism commissioner Felix Klein rejected the movement as an example for young people. The statements from Thunberg's circle are "intolerably antisemitic and reflect a political world view that lacks basic democratic values," Klein told the KNA news agency. "Anyone who propagates such attitudes has disqualified themselves as a role model for young people."

Others were even more aggressive. The president of the German-Israeli Association (DIG) and leading Green politician Volker Beck wrote on X that Thunberg was "from now on a full-time Israel hater." And the editor-in-chief of WeltN24, Ulf Poschardt, posted the tweet: "St. Greta Thunberg is hardcore antisemitic."

Klein, Beck and Poschardt are using the narrative created by the ruling class that anyone who criticises the Israeli government is antisemitic. But the opposite is the case. The antisemites are not those who reject the violence of the Zionist state, but those who defend violence in the name of the fight against antisemitism and thus associate all Jews with genocide.

The accusation that Thunberg is a "full-time Israel-hater" or "hardcore antisemite" is also a foul trivialisation of genuinely antisemitic forces. The same politicians and media who are now attacking Thunberg with the false accusation of antisemitism are

themselves providing a platform to extreme right-wing and genuinely antisemitic forces. Poschardt's newspaper *Die Welt* and he himself are, for example, among the most aggressive defenders of the far-right Humboldt professor Jörg Baberowski, who systematically trivialises the crimes of the Nazis and even claims that Hitler was "not vicious."

It speaks volumes about the right-wing character of the self-proclaimed German leadership of Fridays for Future that they do not condemn the reactionary hate campaign against Thunberg, but instead join it. Figures such as Luisa Neubauer, herself a member of the Green Party, and Carla Reemtsma have positioned themselves firmly behind Israel's genocide and attacked Thunberg. In an interview with *Die Zeit*, Neubauer declared that she was "disappointed" by Thunberg, and indirectly accused her of "disinformation" and "antisemitism." In future, she said, they would distance themselves from the international FFF umbrella organisation.

This is not the first time that the leaders of FFF Germany have supported German imperialism and its war agenda. Already at the beginning of NATO's proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, Neubauer and Co. positioned themselves in favour of arms deliveries to Ukraine and supported the escalation of NATO's aggression against Russia.

At the time, the *World Socialist Web Site* and the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) pointed out the enormous gulf between the vast majority of climate protestors in Germany and the right-wing "leaders" of FFF Germany. In an article titled "Fridays for Future climate protest leaders back German war drive" we wrote:

But while the participants in the demonstrations were concerned about the development of war and want to prevent a nuclear world war, the self-proclaimed leaders of "Fridays for Future" are doing exactly the opposite. They are trying to turn the movement into a group of cheerleaders for NATO's rearmament and aggression and to put it at the service of the drive to war. This must be prevented at all costs!

The Green politician Luisa Neubauer, who plays a leading role in the movement, expresses

this despicable right-wing policy most sharply. Neubauer not only supports the arming of the Ukrainian military—in whose ranks neo-Nazis and far-right legionnaires from all over the world are fighting—but also the historically unprecedented rearmament of the German army and the war sanctions against Russia.

The same logic lies behind Neubauer's solidarity with Israel and her attack on Thunberg. The German government is not concerned with democracy or even Jewish lives in the Middle East, but with imperialist interests. In order to realize these interests, the broad opposition—especially among young people—must be suppressed. This is why Neubauer is so aggressive and expresses solidarity with the German government's offensive for war and dictatorship.

This shows that workers and young people worldwide who want to fight against climate change, oppression and war need an independent perspective. They must orient themselves towards the international working class and fight for a socialist programme. They need to understand that the same contradictions of capitalism underlie both climate change and the genocide in Gaza. The bourgeoisie is driving climate change in order to generate more and more profit, just as it is waging war and committing genocide in order to pursue its imperialist interests.



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