

Green Party conference in Karlsruhe: Militarism and dictatorship, agitation against refugees

Johannes Stern
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In foreign policy, Germany's Greens have long positioned themselves as the most aggressive imperialist party. Their leading representatives regularly outdo each other with demands for an intensification of the NATO war offensive against Russia and for more arms supplies for Ukraine. The Green Party's leading politicians are also particularly vocal in their support for Israel's genocide against the Palestinians. Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, for example, categorically rejected the call for a ceasefire in Gaza until the very end.

The former pacifists are now playing the same reactionary role in refugee policy. The Green Party conference last weekend in Karlsruhe bore eloquent witness to this. It culminated in an "asylum debate" in which the entire Green leadership advocated intensifying attacks on refugees and immigrants, more deportations and the further dismantling of the right to asylum.

Initially, a motion by the Green Youth, which spoke out against further tightening of asylum laws, was shot down by the vast majority of delegates. Instead, a motion by the party executive board was passed, which, in the style of the extreme right, stated: "Control, order and repatriation are part of the reality of an immigration country like Germany."

In the aggressive debate led by the party executive, the re-elected party co-chairs Ricarda Lang and Omnid Nouripour, Economics Minister Robert Habeck and Baerbock condemned the Green Youth motion as an attack on the federal government. The message was unmistakable. In future, the Greens will continue to push for the implementation of the refugee policy of the extreme right.

Just last week, German-Italian government consultations took place in Berlin with the far-right cabinet of Giorgia Meloni, the Italian head of government and Mussolini admirer. At a joint press conference, Chancellor Olaf Scholz invoked the common goal of "combating irregular migration and the criminal organisations that make a lot of money from it."

In means concrete mass terms, deportations, organised detention camps for refugees in Europe and Africa and the further expansion of "Fortress Europe." The consequences are inhumane and deadly. Since 2014, around 30,000 people have drowned in the Mediterranean and many more have died at the EU's external borders, which are secured with walls and barbed wire.

The Greens specialise in decorating the EU's murderous policy with a few "humanitarian" phrases and measures—which only makes the whole thing even more repulsive. For example, the adopted motion bears the cynical title "Humanity and Order" and promises to further develop the notorious border protection agency Frontex—which is infamous for its brutal pushbacks of refugees—"in accordance with the rule of law." Deportations should also be carried out with "significantly better psychosocial support before and during the deportations."

The Greens' election programme adopted at the party conference makes clear that the attacks on refugees and migrants are directed against the entire working class. The ruling class is reacting to the growing opposition to militarism, war and social attacks by establishing a police state. And the Greens are in favour of expanding this throughout Europe.

"Modern and efficient police and judicial work must also take place across borders in a united Europe," reads the section "Strengthening police cooperation." The secret services should also operate across Europe. Specifically, the Greens are calling for the establishment of a "European intelligence agency" for "better cooperation" between European services.

The establishment of an authoritarian regime goes hand in hand with the explosion of imperialist violence, which is also vehemently supported by the Greens. The party conference passed a resolution that fully supports Israel's genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. Israel, like every other state, has "the right under international law

to defend itself ... and the Israeli government has the duty to protect its citizens in the long term,” the Greens declare.

In fact, Israel’s actions have nothing whatsoever to do with “self-defence” or even the “protection” of the Jewish population. The far-right Netanyahu government is pursuing a targeted policy of ethnic cleansing and destruction, which Craig Mokhiber, head of the New York office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who has since resigned in protest, describes as “textbook genocide.”

The current ceasefire has only made the enormity of the genocide in Gaza more visible. According to an unofficial count by the Ministry of Information in Gaza, 14,352 people have already lost their lives, including more than 6,000 children and 4,000 women. Other estimates put the death toll as high as 20,000. More than 1.7 million people have been displaced from their homes and 233,000 housing units have been destroyed. Schools and hospitals were also systematically bombed.

The imperialist violence supported by the Greens is not limited to the Middle East. At the party conference, the Greens once again positioned themselves as the most aggressive proponent of the NATO war offensive against Russia. We will “keep our word and continue to stand by Ukraine in its fight for freedom—with weapons, with money, with reconstruction,” Habeck railed to thunderous applause from the delegates.

In further remarks, the economics minister then made it clear that what was taking place in Ukraine and elsewhere was not about “freedom” and “democracy,” but about imperialist superpower interests. Powers such as the US and China were competing for “mining rights to raw materials” with “great determination,” and Europe and Germany would also have to “assert themselves,” he said. For too long, “the question of whether Germany, whether Europe is doing enough for this self-assertion” had been brushed aside.

The Greens’ “climate policy” also serves to enforce Germany’s war and great power interests. Even after the judgement of the Supreme Court declaring the climate fund to be unconstitutional, Habeck explained that he was fighting for the planned measures. Because now “the competition for climate technologies” was being waged. While others were wrapping “horseshoes in their gloves,” Germany could not go into “a boxing match” that it wanted to win with “its hands tied behind its back.” What was at stake was nothing less than the “fighting strength of this republic” and Germany’s “self-assertion.”

The call for more German and European leadership also dominates the Greens’ election programme. “That is our perspective, that is our political mission: to defend and strengthen the EU’s global capacity to act,” reads Chapter C on foreign policy. The party therefore advocates “a

sovereign and self-confident Europe that does not wait and see but takes the reins of action into its own hands; a Europe that frees itself from its dependencies and assumes global responsibility.” We need “a strong and sovereign EU that can act as a global political player.”

The military is at the centre of this. The programme calls for better “European and transatlantic integration and interoperability of our armed forces” in order to “effectively ensure European defence capability”—i.e., war capability. At the same time, the aim is to “expand closer cooperation between armed forces, for example within permanent EU units” and “deepen the joint EU command structure and European military cooperation initiatives.”

The aggressiveness with which the Greens act in all policy areas is rooted in the class interests of the wealthy upper-middle-class layers for whom they speak. Their wealth and privileges are directly linked to the realisation of capitalist and imperialist interests. They see the growing opposition among workers and young people as a mortal danger that must be suppressed.

In his speech in Karlsruhe, Habeck recalled the founding party conference of the Greens in 1980 in the same city and explained with his characteristic cynicism that the party was founded “as an anti-party,” but then “took responsibility” and “changed” as a result. Politics was not “the recitation of noble doctrines.”

With the recent Karlsruhe party conference the transformation of the Greens into a right-wing and militaristic law-and-order party—a development that was inherent in their petty-bourgeois DNA from the very beginning—has reached a new peak, with its agitation against refugees and support for war and dictatorship.



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