

Germany's call for the bomb

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Donald Trump's announcement that he would no longer support European NATO states if he becomes president again, unless they rearm massively enough, is being used by the ruling class in Germany for an aggressive campaign in favour of its own nuclear weapons. Hardly a day goes by without a leading politician or a central media organisation calling for a German or European nuclear bomb.

The current issue of Germany's highest-circulation news magazine *Der Spiegel* shows a menacing-looking Trump on the cover. Trump is quoted saying, "I wouldn't protect you!" followed by the question, "Does Germany need the bomb now?" The magazine's unequivocal answer is yes.

Among other things, the authors are outraged that the "uproar was great" when the Social Democrats' lead candidate for the European elections, Katarina Barley, "stated the obvious in the Berlin *Tagesspiegel* and called for consideration of a European nuclear weapon." The necessary "discussion about building a European nuclear umbrella" should no longer be "dismissed as a glass bead game [arcane]" by the chancellor and his advisers.

In fact, the government has long been working feverishly behind the scenes on alternatives to the US nuclear umbrella, in which Germany is involved through "nuclear sharing." Even though Scholz prefers to avoid any public debate, "Trump scenarios are being played out in confidential meetings in the chancellery, the foreign ministry and the defence ministry," *Der Spiegel* reports. Confidential talks are already taking place with the "nuclear powers Britain and France." Also at the instigation of the Chancellery.

In his speech at the Munich Security Conference, Scholz also spoke indirectly about the transformation of the EU into a nuclear power. "More than ever, we need to ensure that our deterrence fulfils modern requirements," he said. In its first National Security Strategy, which was adopted last summer, Germany had therefore decided, among other things, to promote "the development and introduction of future capabilities such as stand-off precision weapons." Discussions were currently underway with France and the UK. Obviously, the aim was to equip these "stand-off precision weapons" with nuclear warheads.

The aggressive media campaign serves to advance these

insane plans and prepare the population for a much more comprehensive rearmament campaign, including the nuclear bomb.

In an editorial, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* editor Berthold Kohler warned that Trump's return to the White House "would also have consequences for Europe that we don't want to imagine but must." And he added provocatively, "Imagining alone is not enough, of course. Germany must finally prepare itself resolutely for the fact that the backbone of its security against military attacks and political blackmail could break away."

"Prepare itself resolutely" means nuclear armaments. The Scholz government should "no longer bury its head in the sand and hope that the Trump nightmare will be over when it pulls it out again." The Europeans must "massively rearm conventionally without any further delay," but "also have nuclear forces that can restore the balance of terror in Europe, which is being disrupted by America in a way that Moscow had never dared to hope."

Significantly, the former pacifists of the Green Party are among the most aggressive nuclear warmongers. Former Green foreign minister Joschka Fischer, who initiated the first German combat mission since the Second World War during his time in office, called for "our own nuclear deterrent" in *Die Zeit* back in December. Last week, the *taz* newspaper, which is close to the Greens, followed up with a commentary under the headline "Yes to the nuclear bomb." In it, business editor Ulrike Herrmann cynically praises nuclear weapons as "paradoxical weapons" that are needed "to prevent a nuclear war."

This turns reality on its head. In fact, with the constant escalation of the proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, which they themselves provoked, the leading NATO powers—including Germany—are not only accepting an all-destructive nuclear third world war but are actively preparing for it. The most senior Luftwaffe officer (Air Force) General Ingo Gerhartz threatened Russia with the use of nuclear weapons back in June 2022. "For a credible deterrent, we need both the means and the political will to implement nuclear deterrence, if necessary," he said.

The *World Socialist Web Site* commented at the time:

“The fact that a German general is openly threatening to use nuclear weapons against Russia must be taken as a serious warning. Seventy-seven years after the fall of the Third Reich, a fascist mentality is once again spreading in the ruling class. It is ready to commit the worst crimes once again in order to assert its imperialist interests.”

A double interview recently conducted by the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* with the notorious political scientists Carlo Masala and Herfried Münkler gives a particularly drastic impression of this. In it, the two pro-war professors out-do each other with calls for nuclear armament and possible nuclear strikes against Russia. “Nuclear weapons no longer prevent conventional war, they are a way of expanding it,” said Münkler. Germany needed to find “a different response to this than simply shying away from it.”

Masala calls for a return “to the principle of ‘massive retaliation’” and “to the old NATO maxim of responding to every attack with a major nuclear counter-attack.” The basic issue was “that we have to organise defence so quickly and hard that Russia cannot exploit its advantages,” he said. What was needed were “deep strike capabilities,” i.e., “the ability to immediately attack strategically relevant targets in Russia with medium-range missiles or conventionally equipped intercontinental missiles.”

This is nothing less than a plea for a third nuclear world war. Russian military doctrine authorises the use of nuclear weapons to defend Russian and Russian-claimed territory. And leading Russian politicians have repeatedly threatened to respond with nuclear strikes in the event of a full-scale NATO attack. Neither Münkler nor Masala and the other warmongers in official politics and the media have ever explained what their scenario is and how many millions of lives they are prepared to sacrifice. The fact is that a nuclear war with Russia would not only completely destroy Europe, but potentially turn the entire planet into a nuclear desert.

Despite this danger, the government continues to escalate the conflict with Russia. A motion passed in the Bundestag (federal parliament) on Thursday by the government coalition parties calls for a further massive expansion of military support for Ukraine with the declared aim of extending the war deep into the Russian heartland. Although the Taurus cruise missiles long demanded by Ukraine are not explicitly mentioned, there is no doubt that these are also on the agenda.

According to the motion, the “delivery of additional long-range weapons systems and ammunition is necessary to enable Ukraine to carry out targeted attacks on strategically relevant targets far to the rear of the Russian aggressor in accordance with international law and to further strengthen its land forces with the delivery of armoured combat systems and protected vehicles.” In this context, “an immediate

replenishment should be initiated in the event of the Bundeswehr’s disposal of armoured vehicles.”

This madness, which goes hand in hand with massive attacks on the social and democratic rights of the working class at home, has deep objective causes. As in the 1930s, the ruling class is reacting to the collapse of capitalism by turning to militarism, fascism and world war. This is about Germany’s old imperialist goals and desires: to become a world power and in the process to annex both Ukraine and Russia.

The tangible interests at stake are being articulated ever more clearly. One of the leading foreign policy experts, Roderich Kiesewetter, (Christian Democrat, CDU) pointed out a few weeks ago in broadcaster ARD’s programme *Report from Berlin* that a military victory over Russia in Ukraine was “also an extremely [sic] economic question.”

“If Ukraine disintegrates, the follow-up costs will be much greater than if we go in much stronger now,” he declared. “And if Europe wants to realise the energy transition, it needs its own lithium deposits. The largest lithium deposits in Europe are in the Donetsk-Luhansk region.”

The working class must oppose this imperialist policy of plunder, which is already leading to a new genocide against the Palestinians in the Middle East and is increasingly jeopardising the survival of all humanity, with its own strategy of socialist world revolution. This is what the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) is fighting for in the European elections together with its sister parties in the Fourth International. Our election statement reads:

“The only legitimate conclusion that can be drawn from Nazi Germany’s war of extermination and the Holocaust, the worst crimes in human history, is this: The working class must never again permit war and fascism and must eliminate once and for all the root of this horror, capitalism.”



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