

German Green and Christian Democratic politicians dismiss danger of nuclear war

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The competition among media outlets and politicians to determine who is the most aggressive warmonger continues to reach new heights every day. In an angry commentary in the Monday edition of the *FAZ*, foreign policy experts Anton Hofreiter (Greens) and Norbert Röttgen (Christian Democrats, CDU) called for a massive escalation of the NATO war against Russia in Ukraine.

Under the headline “The Chancellor’s Catastrophic Defeatism,” the two notorious warmongers attack German Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democrats, SPD) because “he is willing to be put under pressure by Putin.” Coupled “with deliveries of too few weapons too late,” this is “fatal.” Scholz had already hesitated on past weapons deliveries and is now repeating this with the Taurus cruise missiles, they declared. “Ukraine urgently needs long-range missiles to at least compensate for the acute shortage of ammunition at the front and to destroy Russian ammunition depots in the occupied territories,” the commentary declared.

Not only the thrust—direct attacks on Russia with German missiles—but also the rhetoric is reminiscent of the war madness in the First and Second World Wars. “It’s our Europe. We must defend it and, if the US fails, compensate for its aid if necessary,” they declared. Hofreiter and Röttgen demanded that “not the slightest doubt should arise” about the “unconditional will that we do not give up Ukraine and thus our values and interests.”

And they threateningly added: “If we do not consistently support Ukraine now, Putin feels encouraged to invade other countries. Only when it becomes clear that this war cannot be won militarily will Russia be ready for negotiations.”

The ruling circles in the German Empire and the Nazi regime also justified the unleashing of German

militarism with the fairy tale of the Russian storming of Europe and the cynical argument that total war was the fastest way to peace. In fact, the propaganda served to justify the pursuit of the predatory interests of German imperialism with increasingly brutal methods of mass murder.

The racist war of annihilation of the Wehrmacht against the Soviet Union, which will mark its 83rd anniversary on June 23 and was aimed at conquering the entire European part of the Soviet Union, claimed the lives of at least 27 million Soviet citizens. Today, a full-scale war with the nuclear-armed power Russia would cost many more lives. A nuclear escalation would have the potential not only to destroy all of Europe but to wipe out human civilization as a whole.

This does not trouble warmongers like Hofreiter and Röttgen. Their rant culminates in the statement that one must not be deterred by the danger of a nuclear escalation. Because there will be no such thing, they claim. “Nuclear war, Escalation, War Party” are merely “slogans” coined by the Chancellor “which signal to Putin only one thing: he can continue to break international law and international treaties and invade countries without serious consequences.

“A chancellor talking about nuclear war? This is outrageous,” the two of them rage. Because, “of course,” one knows “in the Chancellery as well as in Parliament and on the street that Putin has no interest in a nuclear dispute. That he does not hold this card in his hand at all, because he would lose China as his most important ally and the reaction of the US would be enormous.” So it is “about conventional war,” and “Putin has already fully escalated it.”

Hofreiter and Röttgen know that they are lying. Just one day before their comment in the *FAZ*, the *New York Times* published an article titled “Biden’s Armageddon

Moment: When Nuclear Detonation Seemed Possible in Ukraine.” The article details extensive discussions that took place at the end of 2022 within the Biden government about the possibility that the Ukraine war would expand into a nuclear conflict with Russia.

The article’s author, David Sanger, wrote that the CIA told Biden that “under a singular scenario in which Ukrainian forces decimated Russian defensive lines and looked as if they might try to retake Crimea—a possibility that seemed imaginable that fall—the likelihood of nuclear use might rise to 50 percent or even higher.” Sanger reported that the Biden administration, for its part, was making “urgent preparations ... for a US response” to a possible Russian nuclear strike.

Sanger also reported on Scholz’s role in the nuclear exchange. He was “on his way to a planned visit to Beijing,” where he “should inform Chinese President Xi Jinping about the intelligence information and urge him to make public and private statements to Russia warning that there is no place for the use of nuclear weapons in the Ukraine conflict.”

As the WSWS has noted, an article by Sanger—a well-known mouthpiece of the US military and intelligence agencies—is “less of a news article than a controlled release of information by US intelligence agencies.” The aim of the article is “to acclimate the public to the possibility of the war becoming nuclear” and place “the onus on Russia, when it is, in fact, the US and NATO powers that are engaged in a massive escalation of the war, potentially involving the direct deployment of NATO troops to Ukraine.”

The commentary by Hofreiter and Röttgen serves the same purpose. In order to escalate the war and pursue the interests of German imperialism against Russia by all available means, they deny, against their better knowledge, the danger of a nuclear escalation. To even mention this is considered an expression of weakness. “Scholz’s rhetoric makes us weaker than we are,” they rage. “He only gave up his refusal to supply Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine when the US promised to supply Abrams tanks. The message to Putin: Germany cannot do without the US.” This is “catastrophic defeatism.”

The fact that Hofreiter and Röttgen and the other leading warmongers in the political establishment and the media are taking shots at Scholz only shows how aggressively the ruling class is behaving again, 78 years

after the fall of the Third Reich. Scholz is anything but a “peace chancellor who Putin laughs about“ (*Der Spiegel*) but the war chancellor who declared the beginning of a “new epoch” and is systematically advancing the offensive of German militarism.

Scholz’s current assurances not to supply Taurus missiles and not to send German soldiers to Ukraine follow a well-known procedure. The supply of battle tanks was also prepared long behind the scenes and coordinated with Washington before it was publicly announced. Germany is now the leading supplier of tanks.

Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock (Greens) spoke out again as recently as Sunday in favour of supplying Taurus missiles. Previously, the leaked conversation among German military commanders already revealed how concretely Scholz’s generals are discussing whether and how the cruise missiles can be delivered to Kiev and fired at Russian targets.

As if to underline that he, too, is firmly in the camp of warmongers, Scholz placed himself at the head of the campaign against the Pope on Monday. The latter called for peace negotiations over the weekend and declared that “he who has the courage to negotiate under the white flag” was strong. “As one can imagine, the Chancellor does not agree with the Pope on this issue,” Scholz then announced via his spokesman. In other words, the war flag flies over the Chancellery.



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