

German government supports Tabeen massacre and Kursk invasion

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For Germany's ruling class, which has committed the worst crimes in human history, genocide and world war are once again part of political normality. The statements made by government and ministry spokespeople at the federal press conference on Monday bore shocking witness to this.

After the Foreign Ministry had initially shed a few crocodile tears in a tweet on X about the Israeli attack on the Tabeen school in Gaza City, the government's Deputy Spokesperson Wolfgang Büchner made it unmistakably clear that Berlin supports such massacres and the genocidal actions of the Israeli army as a whole.

There should be "no reversal of responsibility here," Büchner declared provocatively. After all, "this whole terrible situation we are in today began with a bestial terrorist attack by Hamas." Israel had "the right to defend itself." And the "reality on the ground" also included the fact that "Hamas uses and deploys schools, hospitals and kindergartens as command centres and abuses the people in the Gaza Strip ... as shields."

This is the narrative of the fascist Netanyahu government, which is using the uprising of the oppressed Palestinians on October 7 last year to carry out genocide. Israel's leading politicians and military leaders have never made a secret of this. As early as October 9, 2023, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant declared that Israel was placing the Gaza Strip under "complete siege. No electricity, no food, no water, no fuel." They were fighting against "human animals" and were acting accordingly.

And Netanyahu himself, with whom Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democratic Party, SPD) spoke again on the phone earlier this week, threatened on October 28, 2023: "You must remember what Amalek did to you," referring to a passage in the Old Testament that demands: "Now go and smite Amalek ... Do not spare them, but kill man and woman, children and infants."

The incessant and targeted attacks on hospitals, schools and the entire social infrastructure in Gaza are in line with this genocidal agenda. The Tabeen massacre was one of the worst atrocities to date. At least 80 people were killed in the attack and dozens injured, including many women and children who had sought refuge in the school.

The war crime, which is being cold-bloodedly justified by the German government, is well documented. A video cited by the *Guardian* shows the "appalling loss of life, with body parts, debris and destroyed furniture strewn across blood-soaked mattresses." A rescue worker, Abu Anas, told AP news agency that the attack came without warning. "Some people were praying, others were washing and still others were sleeping upstairs, including children, women and the elderly."

In several ways, the government press conference underscored that Berlin, alongside Washington, is one of the most aggressive supporters of the genocide which, according to a study by the British magazine *The Lancet*, has already cost around 186,000 lives. When asked, the Foreign Ministry spokesperson Kathrin Deschauer confirmed that Berlin had intervened in Israel's favour at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.

Last Tuesday, the German government—along with the US, the Czech Republic and Hungary—submitted a letter of protest to the ICC calling on the court not to issue the arrest warrants against the heads of government in Jerusalem, which ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan had requested in May. The message is clear: Netanyahu and his genocidal regime should have a free hand to continue the genocide in every respect.

The German government's intervention in The Hague is so provocative that it has even triggered criticism in parts of the bourgeois press. For example, a commentary in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* states that "what Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu is being accused of" was "behaviour

that is rightly marked as a major crime under international humanitarian law.” It was therefore “puzzling why the German Foreign Ministry has written to the Hague Criminal Court in favour of leaving Netanyahu alone.”

In fact, the puzzle is not difficult to solve. Eight decades after the Holocaust and the Nazi war of extermination against the Soviet Union, which resulted in the deaths of at least 27 million Soviet citizens, German imperialism is returning to its genocidal traditions. Since the beginning of the war, the German government has not only unconditionally supported Israel’s actions and criminalised widespread resistance to them but has also increased German arms deliveries to Israel more than tenfold.

Behind the official mantra that unconditional support for Israel is an “affair of state” for Germany, which is being emphasised by all parties in the Bundestag (parliament), is not the protection of Jewish life. For the imperialist powers, above all, Washington and Berlin, Israel serves as a bridgehead to militarily enforce their economic and geostrategic interests in the Middle East and beyond. The unleashing of the Israeli killing machine is part of the larger goal of also eliminating Iran and Hezbollah in Lebanon and thus advancing the war offensive against Russia and China.

The government press conference itself threw a spotlight on these wider imperialist war plans. When it came to the current invasion of the Russian region of Kursk by the Ukrainian army, government spokesman Büchner initially claimed that the attack was a “secret operation prepared without feedback.” However, the spokesman for the Ministry of Defence, Colonel Arne Collatz, left no doubt that Berlin was involved and supported the invasion. When asked how “you in the Ministry of Defence assess this operation,” Collatz explained:

Our exchange with our Ukrainian friends is close and trusting, and that applies to all the support measures we have provided and will continue to provide. For us, there is no question about the legality of the operation; this has also been sufficiently answered by many legal experts ... and there are no additional requirements for the use of weapons—at least as far as transfers from the Bundeswehr’s (Armed Forces) stockpile are concerned—that have been issued there or that need to be observed. There are no obstacles, and

Ukraine is free to choose its options.

In other words, in its megalomaniacal plan to militarily defeat the nuclear power Russia and subjugate the resource-rich and geostrategically central country, there are no longer any “red lines,” as the WSWS explains in a recent perspective. When asked by a journalist whether “German weapons may also be used if it is not about a deployment area on the border with Ukraine on Russian territory, but about an advance ... towards Moscow?” Collatz replied succinctly: “These are Ukrainian weapons.”

And in response to a further question as to whether the tanks supplied by Germany “could be used by Ukraine” to “advance into Russian territory?” Collatz replied:

[It] applies what I have just said: If weapons from Germany are made available to Ukraine, then Ukraine assures us that it will use them within the framework of international law, and there are no further conditions.

Such statements provide an insight into the revanchist and essentially fascist mindset that once again exists among leading German politicians and military brass. In August 1943, two years after the start of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, Hitler’s Wehrmacht (Army) suffered a decisive defeat in the largest armoured battle in history at Kursk.

Now the German ruling class apparently believes the time has come to retaliate for its earlier war defeats and, in the process, is also rehabilitating the war criminals of the past. Significantly, Collatz also defended the Bundeswehr’s recently supplemented “Traditions Decree” with “reference to the current discussion about war fitness, military fitness or operational fitness.” The document, which has been in force since July 12, explicitly names leading generals and officers of the Nazi Wehrmacht as “establishing tradition” and “creating identity” for the Bundeswehr.



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