

German Chancellor Merz justifies genocide in Gaza

Peter Schwarz
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Countless pupils have read George Orwell's novel *1984* in secondary school. What took place yesterday in Germany, however, surpasses Orwell's dystopian vision. The second anniversary of the start of the Israeli genocide in Gaza was the occasion for a propaganda campaign in which one omission, distortion and lie was trumped by the next. Hardly a word was spoken, hardly a line published that did not turn reality on its head.

Flags flew at half-mast throughout Germany, and memorial services were held everywhere for the 1,200 Israeli victims of the Hamas attack. At the same time, there was barely a mention of the murder of at least 67,000 Palestinians, the displacement of another 2 million, the use of hunger as a weapon, the destruction of hospitals, schools and almost all residential buildings in Gaza, as well as all other documented war crimes committed by the Israeli government and army.

Silence means consent. The German government is deeply complicit in the crimes of the Netanyahu regime. It supports it with weapons, defends it politically and cracks down on anyone who protests against the genocide of the Palestinians.

The reason is not—and never has been—"making amends for the Holocaust." The German government uses the Zionist state to pursue its own imperialist interests in the resource-rich and strategically important region of the Middle East. It supports Israel because, as Chancellor Friedrich Merz admitted in a rare moment of honesty, it "is doing the dirty work for all of us."

The Palestinians stand in the way of complete imperialist control over the Middle East. That is why they must be destroyed. Washington, Berlin, Tel Aviv and the reactionary Arab rulers all agree on this. This is why they all cheer US President Trump's "peace plan," which leaves the Palestinians the option of either renouncing all their rights or being exterminated.

The commemorative events on October 7 were a cynical

attempt to obscure these facts. They were not aimed at showing solidarity with the victims of October 7—whose relatives have been protesting against Netanyahu for two years—but to intimidate everyone, including the numerous Jews who reject the genocide in Gaza.

The highest representatives of the German state all took part. Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier visited a synagogue in Leipzig. Bundestag President Julia Klöckner opened an exhibition at Tempelhof Airport that reconstructs the attack on the Nova music festival. And Chancellor Friedrich Merz warned in a video address of growing antisemitism in Germany. At the Brandenburg Gate, the names of the victims of the Hamas attack were read out and the words "Bring them home now" projected.

In the course of all this, the entire historical and political background was denied and the Hamas attack portrayed as an act of terrorism that came out of the blue to strike a peaceful Israel—instead of as a reaction to the 75-year history of the brutal oppression of the Palestinians and the transformation of Gaza into an open-air prison.

Hamas itself, an Islamist, nationalist organisation with no viable perspective, was long promoted by Israel as a counterweight to the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization), whose transformation into a compliant instrument of Israel ultimately led to the rise of the seemingly more radical Islamists.

The claim that Israel was taken by surprise by the Hamas attack has also long been refuted. In fact, Israeli intelligence had known about the plans for months. Nevertheless, all Israeli troops were withdrawn from the border, allowing the lightly armed Hamas fighters to enter Israel unhindered.

When Israeli troops finally arrived several hours later, they proceeded so aggressively with combat helicopters and tanks that numerous Israelis, an estimated 360 out of 1,140, were killed by Israeli soldiers and not by Hamas.

There has never been an independent investigation into this. The so-called Hannibal Directive, according to which soldiers are killed to prevent them from being taken hostage, is also said to have been implemented.

The widespread claim that Israeli women were raped by Hamas fighters has also proven to be pure propaganda. After 14 months, Israeli prosecutor Moran Gaz had to admit that there was no evidence to support such claims.

The Netanyahu government, beset by corruption trials and massive opposition, saw the Hamas attack as a welcome opportunity to put its long worked out murderous plans into action.

In the West Bank, which had nothing to do with the Hamas attack, fascist settlers intensified their terror with the support of the government. Nearly a thousand Palestinians have been killed there in the last two years and 10,000 injured. Israel has also murdered numerous political leaders and scientists in Lebanon and Iran.

All these crimes are supported and covered up by the German government and all parties in the Bundestag. The Left Party (Die Linke) is no exception, even if it supports some of the protests against the Gaza war pro forma.

Left Party leaders Ines Schwardtner and Jan van Aken published a statement on October 7 that hardly differs from the line taken by the federal government. They too condemn the “terrorist attack by Hamas,” which they say “destroyed the fundamental idea of the state of Israel, which is to provide security for Jews.” And they, too, describe it as their duty to “combat antisemitism in Germany.”

The rise of antisemitism in Germany, which both Chancellor Merz and the Left Party invoke, is another Orwellian distortion.

There is no doubt that antisemitism exists in Germany, but its main source is the ranks and milieu of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), whose leaders have described the Holocaust as a “piece of fly shit” in an otherwise glorious German history (Alexander Gauland) and the Holocaust Memorial as a “disgrace for Germany” (Björn Höcke). At the same time, the AfD stands firmly behind the Israeli government, whose actions against the Palestinians are fully in line with the AfD’s own hostility towards Muslims and migrants.

The figures released describing a rapid increase in “antisemitic incidents” cited by Merz, the Left Party and numerous press reports indiscriminately mixes genuine antisemitism with criticism of the Israeli government. Thus, every poster, slogan and protest directed against the

genocide becomes an “antisemitic incident.”

The figures come from the Federal Association of Research and Information Centres on Anti-Semitism (RIAS), which counts 8,627 antisemitic incidents nationwide for the year 2024—77 percent more than in the previous year. According to its own information, RIAS records “incidents above and below the threshold of criminal liability from the perspective of those affected.” A report—or denunciation—is sufficient for an incident to be included in the statistics.

“Most of the documented incidents with a clear political and ideological background were related to anti-Israel activism,” writes RIAS. “A total of 5,857 cases could be classified accordingly.” Any protest against the Israeli government is thus registered as an “antisemitic incident.”

As examples of “relativising the Shoah,” RIAS cites, among other things, the following “antisemitic slogans”: “One Holocaust does not justify another” or “Nothing learned from the Holocaust.” This means that, according to RIAS, any comparison of the genocide in Gaza with the Shoah is, by definition, antisemitic and thus included in its statistics on “antisemitic incidents.”

Support for the genocide in Gaza and the slander and suppression of opposition to it must be understood in the context of the massive rearmament and attacks on social services and the living standards of the working class. Faced with the growing crisis of global capitalism, the ruling class, starting with Trump in the United States, is turning once again towards war and fascism. Only an independent, socialist movement of the working class can stop this development.



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