

Germany's Greens approve delivery of Taurus cruise missiles to Ukraine

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At the heart of Germany's Greens lies a need to accompany every political shift to the right with ostentatious hand-wringing. It is not enough for them to sacrifice pacifism to a pro-war policy, environmental protection to the auto industry, asylum rights to Fortress Europe, and democracy to the building of a police state. They also want to be pitied for it. Everyone must see how they wrestle with their consciences as they lay their moral principles at the feet of German imperialism.

Green Party congresses are therefore usually characterised by long, emotional debates, by hundreds of resolutions, counter-motions and counter-counter-motions, as well as by backroom intrigues. Every word, every comma, is bartered over—until, finally, a rotten compromise emerges, which no Green minister or office holder has ever cared about.

And so it was again last weekend in Hanover. This time, the dispute revolved around the Middle East conflict. With the Israeli army having killed well over 70,000 Palestinians and turned the Gaza Strip into a field of rubble, and Green Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock—who actively supported the genocide—no longer in office, the Greens have felt compelled, for electoral reasons, to soften in words their unconditional support for Israel.

Franziska Brantner, Green co-chair, once an intern at the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Tel Aviv, foresaw the coming disputes and set up a working group on the subject, in which differing positions were represented, weeks before the congress. The federal executive board then presented a main motion that on the one hand justified the war—Israel has the right under international law to defend itself against attacks—but on the other hand described Israel's conduct of the war as “in violation of international law”. More than 100

amendments were submitted in advance of the party congress.

While the delegates in the hall voted on formalities and the filling of various party posts and argued over the position on Gaza, Brantner spent hours negotiating compromises in back rooms and was eventually successful. An hour after midnight, a majority of the 800 delegates voted for a foreign policy motion that alters a few words but otherwise leaves everything unchanged.

Although they advocate a two-state solution, the Greens could not bring themselves even to the symbolic demand that Germany recognise a Palestinian state. Instead, they agreed on the formulation that recognition by Germany must be “a priority step” in “the current peace process”. The “current peace process” refers to the Trump Plan, which would turn Gaza into a protectorate of the imperialist powers and deny Palestinians all democratic rights.

The dispute over Palestine was intended to conceal the fact that the Greens have now overtaken the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) of Chancellor Merz on the right in matters of war policy. They advocate an escalation of the war against Russia and are the only party in the Bundestag (parliament) to call for the delivery of Taurus cruise missiles to Ukraine. Merz has since backed down on this question, as delivering the long-range and highly precise Taurus could trigger a Russian military strike against German targets.

“The staying power of Ukraine depends not least on our support,” states the main motion adopted by the delegates. It also calls for “a massive tightening of sanctions”. It declares as “unacceptable” the fact that “individual EU member states are still pouring millions into Putin's war chest every day by purchasing Russian oil and gas”.

The motion describes Trump's Ukraine plan as "an obvious attempt to subjugate Ukraine and strike a dangerous deal at Europe's expense". Trump is said to be "seeking a pact with the war criminal Putin".

In preparation for a war with Russia, the congress spoke in favour of compulsory call-up examinations for all young men, and therefore a reintroduction of conscription through the back door. Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (Social Democratic Party, SPD) is—for now—still relying on voluntary service.

That the Greens are moving further and further to the right was also shown by the enthusiastic applause with which the congress celebrated Cem Özdemir. The long-standing Bundestag member and former federal minister of agriculture hopes to replace the Green state premier of Baden-Württemberg, Winfried Kretschmann, in state elections in March, as Kretschmann is stepping down for reasons of age. Until now, Özdemir has had little prospect of success.

Özdemir has already made clear that he will not adhere either to the programme or the resolutions of the Greens. At the congress he praised former Green Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and his support for the 1999 Yugoslav war, as well his support for the introduction of the Hartz IV welfare and labour "reforms," introduced when the Greens formed a federal coalition government with the SPD. He advocates allowing combustion engine vehicles to remain on the road beyond the year 2035 set by the European Union, and declared: "Climate protection is possible only together with industry, not against industry." A future pact was possible only together with the corporations and not with "radical slogans" and "cloud cuckoo-land slogans," he said.

The delegates thanked him with an extended standing ovation.

The political evolution of the Greens confirms Marx's famous statement that the history of society is a history of class struggles. It is not moral values or Kant's categorical imperative that determine political action, but material class interests.

The Greens embody the affluent layers of the urban middle class—the top 90 to 99 percent on the income scale—whose wealth and lifestyle are threatened by increasing social polarisation, and who look with fear at the radicalisation of the working class and with envy at the richest one percent, whose wealth exceeds their

own many times over.

Of course, there are individual exceptions. Not every well-paid academic and city dweller automatically veers to the right. But once this layer appears as an organised party, it becomes a pillar of the ruling order.

When there was room for social compromise, the Greens presented themselves as "left". In some countries, such as the United Kingdom, where the electoral system has so far kept them from government posts, they still do so today. But the era of social compromise has long since passed.

The constant shift to the right of the German Greens is itself an expression of the advanced crisis of global capitalism, which no longer allows such compromises. It is a harbinger of sharp class struggles in which the working class will emerge as an independent force under its own revolutionary leadership and overthrow capitalism. Building the necessary leadership is now the urgent task of the hour.



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