

Violent attack in Stade, Germany, the product of a brutal society

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The violent shooting deaths of six people in the northern German city of Stade have triggered horror far beyond the country's borders. The victims are four female and two male members of a youth welfare facility and the youth welfare office. According to what is known so far, they had met in a facility that provides shelter for young mothers with children in order to discuss a custody case.

This concerned a three-month-old child who had been separated from its parents. The child was later returned to the mother under conditions she lived with the child in the facility in Stade. The father, who apparently opened fire, had also been asked to attend the meeting. Four victims died at the scene, a fifth during an attempt at resuscitation outside the house, and the sixth shortly afterwards in hospital. The mother and child remained unharmed.

The alleged perpetrator was intercepted and arrested while fleeing the crime scene. He is a 45-year-old man born in Germany with Turkish roots. Also arrested was a 65-year-old woman who drove the getaway car.

In its scale and brutality, the violent attack is reminiscent of the mass shootings that regularly take place in the United States. There, between 15,000 and 20,000 people have been killed by firearms in each of recent years, excluding suicides.

The number of brutal outbreaks of violence is also increasing in Germany. In March 2023, a 35-year-old man shot eight people dead in a Jehovah's Witnesses meeting hall in Hamburg. In December 2024, an attacker drove a car into the Christmas market in Magdeburg, killing six people and injuring 300 others, some seriously. In June, a killer murdered ten people and injured eleven others at a school in Graz, Austria.

The motives of the perpetrators and the circumstances of the crimes vary from case to case. Yet their

ruthlessness reflects a society in which explosive social tensions are mounting without finding any progressive outlet, and in which violence is propagated from the highest level.

Defence Minister Pistorius is campaigning to make Germany 'fit for war' again. Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) youth officers are flooding into schools to get young people enthusiastic about the business of war. The media cheer every drone that destroys a Russian residential building or oil depot. They defend the murder of more than 100,000 Palestinians and the complete destruction of Gaza by the Israeli army and denounce anyone who protests against it. In the US, President Donald Trump is threatening to bomb Iran back to the Stone Age. In Germany, former Left Party leader Jan van Aken rejoices at the treacherous murder of the country's Supreme Leader: 'May he burn in hell.'

At the same time, social tensions are growing immeasurably. Every cent of the many hundreds of billions flowing into war and rearmament is squeezed back out of the working class. Pensions, health spending and wages are being cut back. Month after month, over 10,000 jobs are being destroyed in industry. While the declared fascist Elon Musk becomes \$300 billion richer in a single day and the number of centi-millionaires in Germany rises to over 5,000, millions of people no longer know how to make ends meet. The trade unions are doing everything to smother resistance to this.

Under these conditions, social tensions discharge in individual, irrational and reactionary outbreaks of violence, with the perpetrators often themselves on the edge of madness. These outbreaks of violence are symptoms of the sickness of a rotten social system that now produces only war and reaction, and that must be overthrown.

The political reactions to the violent attack in Stade were predictable: hollow phrases of regret and a return to business as usual. Chancellor Friedrich Merz wrote: 'The news from Stade is deeply shocking.' Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier expressed his thanks to all emergency personnel and doctors. Lower Saxony's State Premier Olaf Lies wrote that the crime left 'the entire state government deeply saddened.'

Not a word of reflection or self-criticism. When conclusions are drawn, they are a call for more police, more surveillance, more repression. As always in such cases, the Turkish roots of the alleged perpetrator are used to stir up racism and strengthen the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD).

Public broadcasters NDR and WDR spread the news that the alleged perpetrator belonged to a large clan in Hanover. So-called. 'Clan crime' is one of the slogans used to whip up agitation against refugees from the Middle East. Even the police and the Lower Saxony Interior Ministry felt compelled to deny it. They were not aware of any clan connection, they stated at a press conference.

The AfD immediately exploited the violent attack for its own ends. AfD Bundestag (federal parliament) member Maximilian Krah wrote on X: 'Germany has become colourful and diverse – thanks to Merkel and her epigones. Only the AfD will heal it again!' Racist comments piled up on the Instagram account of party leader Alice Weidel.

Working people must draw their own conclusions from this terrible event. It is a symptom of a deeply sick society that can no longer be reformed but can only be overthrown and replaced by a socialist order in which it is not profit but the needs of society that take priority.



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