

Far-right Alternative for Germany holds party congress: Police violence and political support pave the way to government

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The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) presented itself as a future governing party at its party conference in Erfurt last weekend, as the fascist Wing faction, led by Björn Höcke consolidated its position on the party executive. This was only possible because representatives of the Christian Democrats (CDU), Social Democrats (SPD), Free Democrats (FDP) and Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW) had previously held out the prospect of cooperation with the far-right party, and because a large-scale police operation hermetically sealed off the party conference from tens of thousands of counter-demonstrators.

The venue and date of the party conference were chosen deliberately. Exactly 100 years ago to the day, on July 3 and 4, 1926, the first Reich Party Congress of the re-established NSDAP took place in nearby Weimar, at which the party reorganised itself following its temporary ban in the wake of the Hitler putsch and definitively pledged its allegiance to Hitler as Führer.

Following this historical precedent, the Thuringian state chairman, Björn Höcke, addressed the delegates in his opening speech as host, exclaiming: “Long live our beloved German fatherland.” He incited hatred against migrants, claimed that paedophilia was being downplayed and not punished severely enough, and announced that he would “treat” counter-demonstrators until they were able to embrace their German identity.

The fascist Höcke managed to secure seats on the federal executive committee for two further close confidants: Stefan Möller and Katrin Ebner-Steiner. Möller, co-leader of the AfD in Thuringia and a member of the Bundestag since 2025, was elected deputy federal spokesperson unopposed with 76.5 percent of the vote, and openly boasted to the delegates about his “thick file at the Office for the Protection of the Constitution [Germany’s domestic intelligence agency].” The Bavarian state parliamentary group leader, Katrin Ebner-Steiner, also joined the party leadership with 55.7 percent of the vote.

Party leaders Alice Weidel and Tino Chrupalla had previously been re-elected with 81.3 percent and 70.1 percent

of the vote respectively; while Chrupalla lost significant support compared with the previous party conference, Weidel was able to consolidate her power base. Six of the 14 executive committee members now come from eastern German regional associations—a reflection of the growing strategic importance of the Höcke camp within the federal party.

Overall, the party leadership remained very cautious about making policy statements at the party conference. This is a calculated move, as any statement on their actual programme would diminish their electoral prospects. The AfD presents itself as the “opposition” and an “alternative,” but in reality it is taking the federal government’s right-wing policies to extremes with the utmost aggression.

It was the only party to have called, as early as the Bundestag election campaign, for an increase in military spending to 5 percent of gross domestic product—a demand that is now being implemented by the federal government and all the other parties in the Bundestag. It welcomes the reintroduction of compulsory military service and the unprecedented rearmament drive, and is absolutely unequivocal in its commitment to German militarism.

Its Bundestag election manifesto envisaged a massive redistribution from the bottom to the top: tax cuts for top earners and corporations, the scrapping of social benefits and the further privatisation of public services. It is no coincidence that it received support from the world’s richest man, Elon Musk. Like its friend Donald Trump, an AfD government would also enforce policies designed to enrich the wealthy and wage war by the most brutal means.

The AfD’s smear campaign against migrants also serves this purpose. When, as a result of rearmament and the enrichment of the wealthy, schools fall into disrepair, rents rise and hospitals are closed, the far-right party shifts the blame onto the most vulnerable in society—in order to protect the rich and build a police state against the working class.

It is precisely this programme that is the reason why there are an increasing number of voices within the political establishment calling for the AfD to be brought into government—ranging from sections of the CDU, through the

former SPD Minister-President Torsten Albig and the FDP under Wolfgang Kubicki, to the entire leadership of the BSW.

This was also reflected in the heavy-handed police operation. Six thousand police officers were deployed to ensure the party conference went ahead despite massive resistance. The police had already escorted delegates to the venue during the night to bypass the blockades set up by tens of thousands of demonstrators. Although the demonstrators remained peaceful, they were repeatedly attacked by the police.

The right-wing Springer press launched a campaign against the demonstrators. It singled out an isolated attack on far-right journalists in order to delegitimise the mass demonstration. Alexander Throm (CDU), spokesperson on home affairs for the CDU/Christian Social Union parliamentary group, was quick to declare: “Anyone who uses violence against journalists is attacking democracy. For freedom of expression and freedom of the press are central pillars of a free society. And that applies regardless of whether the violence comes from the left or the right.”

So while the AfD gathers on the anniversary of a Nazi party congress and elects more and more fascists to its leadership, it is the counter-demonstrators who are allegedly attacking democracy. One would be hard pressed to more openly demonstrate how the other parties are rolling out the red carpet for the AfD.

To the extent there was any criticism of the AfD, it came essentially from the right. Defence Minister Boris Pistorius (SPD) stated that sensitive information would be withheld from an AfD government—not because they are fascists, but because “their proximity to Putin cannot be overlooked.” The Greens’ deputy parliamentary group leader, Konstantin von Notz, also declared: “The AfD is Moscow’s parliamentary arm in Germany.”

The right-wing extremists of the AfD are thus not being criticised for their horrendous rearmament plans, their attacks on social welfare or their schemes to enrich the rich, but because the party is not taking a sufficiently aggressive stance against Russia. The reason for this is obvious: all the established parties are in agreement with the AfD’s social and economic programme. The AfD is the most brutal manifestation of the right-wing shift across the entire political establishment.

The Left Party’s call for the AfD to be stopped with the help of the governing parties, the CDU and the SPD, is therefore a disastrous political trap. At its last party conference, the party resolved to form coalitions with these parties in order to prevent the AfD from gaining ground. One might as well collaborate with the arsonist to put out the fire.

In fact, it is precisely the Left Party’s right-wing policies that have strengthened the AfD. Wherever the party has been part of government, it has, in the name of left-wing politics, supported the social spending cuts, rearmament and wage reductions that paved the way for the AfD. In Thuringia, where the party held

the post of Minister-President for 10 years, the AfD stands at 40 percent in the polls. In the Bundesrat, Germany’s second chamber of parliament, the Left Party also voted in favour of war credits running into the trillions and has repeatedly and emphatically endorsed Germany’s support for the genocidal Israeli regime as Berlin’s *raison d’état*. The party’s first Minister-President, Bodo Ramelow, even boasted that his vote had enabled an AfD fascist to be elected as vice president of the state parliament.

All parties that defend capitalism are moving ever further to the right. It is impossible to combat the rise of the fascists with them—they are part of the problem, not part of the solution. The Left Party, which votes in favour of rearmament in the Bundestag and wants to govern in Thuringia alongside the CDU, is part of the cross-party coalition for war and austerity.

The struggle against fascism is inextricably linked to the struggle against capitalism. The AfD is not a glitch in the democratic system, but the product of a system which, in the deepest crisis of its history, is destroying social programmes, waging wars and eroding democratic rights. Anyone who wants to defeat fascism must eliminate the social conditions that give rise to it.

This requires the independent mobilisation of the working class. Millions of people are affected by this system—as workers, tenants, pensioners, students or the unemployed. They must break with all the parties of the establishment and build their own organs of struggle: rank-and-file committees in workplaces and neighbourhoods that unite resistance against war, austerity and the fascist threat. The trade union leaderships, which have long since degenerated into co-managers of the companies, must be pushed aside.

It is not cooperation with the CDU and SPD, nor accommodation with the bourgeois state, but the revolutionary mobilisation of the working class on the basis of a socialist programme that is the answer to the fascist threat. The unity of workers across all national borders—against their own ruling class, against imperialist war and against fascism—is the perspective for which the Socialist Equality Party and the International Committee of the Fourth International fight.



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