

Report: Police gave neo-Nazi rioters free rein in Chemnitz, Germany

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Between August 26 to September 1, the city of Chemnitz in Saxony was the scene for one of the largest violent neo-Nazi mobilizations in Germany's post-war history. Far-right-wing thugs chased immigrants on the streets and raided left-wing clubs and a Jewish restaurant.

According to data from the German government, 112 far-right-wing crimes were committed in Chemnitz between August 26 and October 11. These offences included the display of symbols of banned organisations, assault and violations of the Explosives Act. In addition, during this period, a terrorist organisation called "Revolution Chemnitz" was formed, which planned attacks on foreigners and political opponents of the far-right.

The events in Chemnitz were preceded by a stabbing death on the fringes of the Chemnitz City Festival of the 35-year-old German-Cuban Daniel H. The exact circumstances of the attack remain unclear, but just a few hours after the incident the stabbing figured prominently in far-right networks and Germany's tabloid newspapers. The reports described Daniel H. as the victim of criminal refugees who were sexually threatening women. This version of events turned out to be entirely fictitious but was used to encourage right-wing extremists from all over Germany and Europe to travel to Chemnitz.

In one of its recent editions, *Der Spiegel* magazine published an article describing the shocking events in Chemnitz based on an internal police report. The report makes clear that although the police were well informed about the activities of the far right, they did nothing to stop the neo-Nazis.

With regard to the riots in Chemnitz the magazine writes: "the police could have been well prepared." This is confirmed by "their own internal daily activity

book". Already "at just after ten o'clock" on Monday the police in Chemnitz received their first notifications about the alleged incident, including a WhatsApp message from Leipzig referring to a "a far-right mobilisation to Chemnitz". Then, at around 13.00 the German state domestic intelligence agency (LfV) declared it expected numbers of far-right demonstrators in the "lower to middle thousands".

Police officials had insisted upon "receiving the secret service information in written form, only in this form could it used to assess the situation," *Der Spiegel* writes. The LfV had fulfilled this "wish" and outlined "a clear scenario". The LfV report referred to a "very high degree of emotionalisation". The alleged manslaughter in Chemnitz was seen as "a welcome occasion for renewed physical confrontation and targeted confrontations with refugees, asylum seekers and political opponents," the intelligence agency report read. Attacks on refugee centres and election campaign offices were not ruled out.

Further information came "from other sources". For example, the Thuringian police believed "that up to 40 dangerous fans of the Rot-Weiß Erfurt football club were on their way". The police also expected 'problematic fans' from Halle and Leipzig" would travel to Chemnitz along with "far-right thugs" from Salzgitter. The state of Baden-Württemberg reckoned "with arrivals from Switzerland and France". At 16.27 the state police operations center in Thuringia reported internally that "A man with 'contact with 6,000 skinheads' was mobilising for Chemnitz by SMS."

Despite the warnings, the Chemnitz police did nothing. According to the internal situation report the "letter from the state intelligence agency was only actually completed at ...more than four hours after the telephone warning". An offer by Lower Saxony interior

minister Boris Pistorius, “to send his Thuringia riot police to Chemnitz,” was turned down with the remark: “The situation is under control.” When the Chemnitz police force finally requested “reinforcements” at 19:06, police commanders reported that “no further forces were available”.

Shortly afterwards, police in the city center lost control. *Der Spiegel* writes: “At 8 pm, the masses began running. Stones flew. At 20:02, police reported: ‘With current forces, a separation of both camps is hardly possible.’ Hooded persons were shouting out: ‘National Resistance’. 20:25. Protesters break out of the Pro Chemnitz demonstration. “Police forces are not enough to prevent this...15 protesters storm a house and break down apartment doors in Theaterstraße.”

That same evening, a group of neo-Nazis also attacked the Jewish restaurant, Shalom. Once again there was no sign of the police, although they knew about the planned attack. According to *Der Spiegel*, reports came in at 21.47 that “20-30 masked persons armed with stones were moving towards Brühl and the Shalom restaurant”. Although the brutal attack was obviously motivated by anti-Semitism the police initially wrote of a “complaint of attempted damage to property”. Only later was the case “correctly assessed” with the words: “Suspicion of dangerous bodily injury” and suspicion of a far-right motivated deed “with an anti-Semitic background”.

According to *Der Spiegel*, state authorities “failed for days” and the police were “hopelessly overwhelmed” in Chemnitz. The “vacuum” was then used by “the right wing to spread their ideology, sometimes with brutal force”. In the end, “extremists even fantasised about a terrorist attack.”

In reality, the “reconstruction” of events by *Der Spiegel* permits only one conclusion: what took place in Chemnitz were stage managed far-right mobilisations and riots which were not only permitted and tolerated by sections of the state apparatus, but possibly even received their active support. Links between right-wing extremists, the police and the state apparatus are manifest in the state of Saxony.

Immediately after the events in Chemnitz, the World Socialist Web Site pointed out the close cooperation taking place between the police and government in the far-right riots. Among other incidents, a prison officer in Saxony forwarded the arrest warrant for a 22-year-

old Iraqi to leading right-wing extremists in order to incite the neo-Nazi mob. Leading politicians, such as the Saxony premier Michael Kretschmer (Christian Democratic Union) and the federal interior minister Horst Seehofer (Christian Social Union) expressed their solidarity with the extreme right-wing protests, while the head of Germany’s federal intelligence agency at the time, Hans-Georg Maassen, went so far as to deny that the far-right attacks had even taken place.



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