

Germany's Greens hold a war conference

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At their national conference last week, Germany's Greens made their singular aim clear: They are determined to enter the next government in order to rearm Germany to become the leading military power in Europe, to continue the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, and to stifle the growing opposition to these wars at home.

The party is reacting to Donald Trump's election victory in the United States and the failure of the coalition government of the Social Democrats (SPD), Greens and Liberal Democrats FDP) by moving further to the right. It is calling for increased rearmament and more state powers at home so that Germany can play a leading role in a strong Europe that fights for its imperialist interests worldwide.

"At the latest, the re-election of Donald Trump puts defence capability and the willingness to invest more in the sovereignty of Europe at the top of the political priorities for the coming years," reads the motion "Responsibility in this time," which the federal executive proposed, and the party conference adopted.

"The new era in military affairs ... as well as in domestic security" must "be continued and strengthened." Only a strong Europe will be heard in the world and be able to assert its interests. In the coming years, "we will have to take the ability to act in the European alliance even more seriously than before in the face of our global partners and threats."

The emergency motion "Strengthening Ukraine, winning peace," which the party conference adopted by a large majority, draws the conclusion from the re-election of Donald Trump that Germany must "immediately take more responsibility for the existential issues of peace and security in Europe." It accuses the Greens' coalition partners, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) and Liberal Democratic Party (FDP), of straining stability and security through their "lack of willingness to provide further military support for Ukraine," thereby attacking them from the right.

The motion strongly advocates a military victory over Russia and regime change in Moscow and rejects any compromise in peace negotiations. "Russia must not win this war, Putin must fail," it says. In the short term, military and diplomatic support for Ukraine must therefore be further

strengthened and sanctions against Russia tightened. In the medium and long term, Russia's military victory must be prevented and "our own political and military capacity to act must be maintained by sending clear signals of resolve."

The motion bluntly states that German imperialist interests are at stake in the war against Russia: "It is in the strategic and security interests of Germany and the EU to resolutely defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine."

The genocide in Gaza also has the full support of the Greens. A month ago, on the anniversary of the Hamas attack, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock (Green) unreservedly backed the Israeli army's killing of tens of thousands of Palestinian women and children.

"Of course, self-defence means not only attacking terrorists, but destroying them," Baerbock announced in the Bundestag (parliament). "That is why I have made it so clear: when Hamas terrorists hide behind people, behind schools, we do not cower in the face of it. Then civilian places can also lose their protected status because terrorists abuse it. That is what Germany stands for, and for us that means the security of Israel."

Now, the party conference has appointed Baerbock together with Economics Minister Robert Habeck as the "top duo" to lead the party into the federal election campaign. Habeck himself was chosen as the chancellor candidate, or, as it is called in Green Party parlance, the "candidate for the people of Germany," with 96.5 percent of the vote at the end of the party conference.

In fact, he is a militaristic candidate. On the question of war, he is even more aggressive than the incumbent chancellor, Olaf Scholz (SPD). In an interview with the broadcaster ARD capital city studio following the party conference, Habeck was asked whether he would reverse Scholz's decision not to deliver Taurus cruise missiles to Kiev: "The answer to that question is yes." He had already called for a new "special fund" for the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces), following from the coalition's previous €150 billion handout for the military.

In order to be ready for a possible coalition with the Christian Democrats (CDU), SPD or FDP after the February 23 election, the party conference got rid of some of its

programmatic baggage and pledged the party's unconditional support for Habeck. When you visit the party's website, you are no longer asked to support the Greens. Instead, it says: "Join Team Robert" and "Be part of Robert's election campaign."

The new leadership, elected by the party conference, consists of Habeck's loyal followers.

Franziska Brantner, who, together with Felix Banaszak, is one of the new party leaders, was previously a state secretary in Habeck's Economic Affairs Ministry and is considered his closest confidante. She has the task of keeping Habeck's back free within the party so that he can operate unhindered. Brantner sees herself as a representative of the business community. Her motto is: "We need investment, investment and more investment."

As a member of the Bundestag's economic and trade committee, Banaszak also has close ties to the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The new party deputy Sven Giegold, a founding member of Attac Germany in his youth, was most recently, like Brantner, a state secretary in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. And campaign manager Andreas Audretsch was previously responsible for economic affairs as deputy leader of the Green parliamentary group.

Under these circumstances, the lip service paid to environmental protection, social equality, humanity and democracy, which was not in short supply at this party conference either, was meaningless and empty, even more so than before. Members of the party's youth organisation in particular, fearing for their political careers, tried to give the conference a left-wing makeover—without success.

The decline of the Greens in the polls from 25 percent in the summer of 2022 to just over 10 percent now is mainly due to the turning away of younger voters who had hoped for better environmental policies and were repelled by the militarism of the Greens. At the end of September, the ten-member federal executive committee of Green Youth resigned en masse and declared its withdrawal from the party. Their successors, who are loyal to the party and its political course, tried to rectify this embarrassment at the conference with "left-wing" proposals. However, all of them were rejected or distorted beyond recognition.

For example, the conference rejected by a two-thirds majority a motion from Green Youth calling for "justice instead of austerity," which demanded the abolition of the debt brake in order to invest in social equalisation, housing construction and education.

In terms of refugee policy, the conference explicitly backed the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which is turning Europe into an impenetrable fortress. An amendment that at least sought to prevent the deportation of refugees to Syria and Afghanistan was watered down to the

extent that this would now be possible.

The conference also rejected the proposal for a wealth tax of at least 1 percent on assets over 2 million euros. Instead, there is now only talk of a tax "on very high wealth above an allowance of several million euros." And everyone knows that Habeck and Co. will ignore this demand.

The transformation of the Greens, whose origins go back to the student protests of 1968, into a leading party of German imperialism has deep social roots. The party is based on prosperous urban middle class layers who, focused on their own well-being and identity issues, have lost all touch with the reality of life for broad sections of the population and react with arrogance and hostility to the growing mass dissatisfaction. Like the Democrats in America, who combine militarism and policies in the interests of Wall Street with identity politics, Germany's Greens are driving the dissatisfied into the arms of the far right. There is no other party that is as hated as the Greens, especially in impoverished areas of eastern Germany.

Their renewed shift to the right underlines the fact that in the federal election on February 23, 2025 there is no establishment party that represents the interests of working people and youth or is even a "lesser evil."

On the questions of war, militarism, stepping up of state repressive powers and social cuts, the SPD, Greens, CDU/CSU and FDP differ only in nuances. The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) and the Left Party split off Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW) are critical of the war in Ukraine, but only because they believe Germany should act more independently of the US. Both are in favour of a strong Bundeswehr and are dividing the working class with their anti-refugee agitation.

There is only one way to fight war, social inequality, environmental destruction and all the evils of capitalist society: the building of an independent movement of the international working class on the basis of a socialist programme. It is to fight for this perspective that the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party) is participating in the federal election.



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