

After the Aschaffenburg attack, all of Germany's establishment parties on far-right course

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Four weeks before Germany's federal elections, the establishment parties are only interested in one thing: agitating against refugees and migrants. The various leading candidates try to outdo one another with demands for deportations and border closures.

The attack by a 28-year-old refugee from Afghanistan on a kindergarten group in Aschaffenburg, in which a two-year-old child and a 41-year-old man were killed and three other people injured, has provided them with an opportune occasion to do so.

Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz (Social Democrat, SPD) spoke of an "act of terror" and declared: "I am sick and tired of seeing such acts of violence occurring in our country every few weeks." He blamed the Christian Democrats (CDU), who had blocked his government's repressive security package in the Bundesrat (upper chamber of parliament) for party-political reasons.

The CDU's lead candidate, Friedrich Merz, announced: "If I am elected Chancellor, on my first day in office, I will instruct the Interior Ministry to permanently control Germany's borders with all of our neighbours and reject all attempts at illegal entry without exception." In fact, this would be tantamount to an entry ban for anyone without valid entry documents and would be a clear violation of the German constitution and applicable EU law.

Bavarian state Premier and CSU Chairman Markus Söder called for a "zero tolerance" policy. Such acts were no longer a coincidence, "Those who don't get it, capitulate."

Green Party Agriculture and Education Minister Cem Özdemir told *Der Spiegel* that the migration issue was the decisive lever for mobilising voters. "We Greens are focussing on humanity and order, that's right. But that alone is not enough. We have to add the words limitation

and practicality."

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) can hardly contain its delight that its anti-immigration propaganda is being copied by the other parties. The far-right party is feeling a tailwind. AfD lead candidate Alice Weidel addressed an open letter to CDU leader Merz in which she described it as a "good sign that you have obviously adopted urgently needed solutions proposed by my parliamentary group to bring about a change of course in migration policy. Weidel called on Merz to initiate the "overdue migration turnaround" in the Bundestag (parliament) together with the AfD before the election.

Sahra Wagenknecht, leader of the BSW, an anti-migration split off from the Left Party, was not to be left out. She blamed the "failure of the chancellor and his interior minister" for the attack in Aschaffenburg and described it as an "asylum policy scandal" that the government was not deporting more refugees. "Anyone travelling from a safe third country should not be entitled to any support in Germany," she demanded.

The murder of a small child is a terrible act that is emotionally disturbing. However, no one should allow themselves to be politically swayed by it.

The perpetrator was obviously mentally ill and urgently needed appropriate treatment. Enamullah O. had arrived in Germany from Afghanistan via the Balkan route in November 2022 and had applied for asylum. According to the European Union's Dublin rules, he was to be deported to Bulgaria immediately, but this failed for reasons that are not yet known. Since then, he has been admitted to psychiatric clinics three times but has always been released.

In order to avoid deportation, Enamullah O. finally agreed to leave Germany voluntarily. On December 11, 2024, the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees

asked him to leave the country. Six weeks later, he committed the fatal attack. If he had received the urgently needed psychological counselling, it would probably not have happened.

However, such humanitarian considerations are not even being considered by the establishment parties and media. They only know one answer to the growing plight of refugees: seal off the borders against, deport and suppress them.

Yet Enamullah O. shares the fate of hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing war zones, severely traumatised, in urgent need of support and who are instead being put under even more pressure by inhumane asylum policies—but who are neither violent nor criminal as a result.

The inhumane treatment of refugees is an expression of a deeply sick society. Billions have been and are being spent to bomb entire countries to rubble—Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Gaza, Ukraine. Yet the victims who manage to escape from the inferno at the risk of their lives are treated like vermin. Donald Trump calls them criminals, psychopaths and invaders, the Nazis spoke of “unworthy lives.”

What’s more, the abuse and death of children is part of everyday life in Germany. However, this is hardly ever reported if those responsible are not migrants or refugees.

According to police crime statistics, 152 children died violently in Germany in 2020, while 134 other children faced attempted homicide. In the same year, almost 5,000 cases of physical abuse and 14,500 cases of sexual violence against children were reported.

There is a close link between the abuse of children and the constant cuts in spending on nurseries, schools and social services, as well as the increase in poverty. But instead of countering this by raising taxes on the rich and expropriating the billionaires, refugees are being made the scapegoats for the social crisis and used as a lightning rod for social tensions.

The revolutionary Marxist Leon Trotsky characterised the Nazi agitation in 1933 with the words: “What must be done in order to improve things? First of all, throttle those who are underneath.” This has not changed since then.

By their agitation against refugees, which now stands at the centre of their election campaigns, the establishment parties are pursuing two goals: dividing the working class and building a police state. The massive stepping up of the powers and capabilities of the police, secret services and border guards, which is being carried out today in the name of repelling refugees, will be directed against

protesting and striking workers and young people tomorrow.

Since Trump returned to the White House, all inhibitions have disappeared. Trump himself is wasting no time. He has ordered raids on millions of migrants, the construction of detention centres and the deployment of thousands of soldiers to the border with Mexico. These are the first steps towards building a police state and establishing a military dictatorship. There is no resistance to this from the official opposition, the Democrats. They are working with Trump.

The German parties are emulating Trump. They may berate his threats of punitive tariffs and fear he will divide the EU and end the Ukraine war at their expense. However, criticism of his fascist policies and his brutal actions against refugees have largely disappeared from the official discourse. Here, Trump’s fascist tirades and gangster-like policies are met with open admiration.

This was exemplified in Davos at the annual meeting of the rich and powerful, the World Economic Forum, last week. When Trump delivered a bizarre speech via video that combined shameless self-praise with mafia-style threats and propositions, some of the most powerful corporate leaders literally crawled in the dust before him and praised him to the skies.

Trump epitomises the rule of the oligarchs. He demonstrates that democracy and the unlimited wealth of a few are incompatible. The establishment parties in Germany are following the same path.

Only the working class can prevent a relapse into fascism and war by intervening in political events, defending its social and democratic rights and expropriating the banks, large corporations and oligarchs. The defence of the rights of refugees and migrants is an inseparable part of this struggle.



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