GlobalResearch
Center for Research on Globalization

Anti-war Protests in Deutschland and the Need to Change Course on Kiev

or a continent and a country that has already borne the brunt of fascism, providing arms to Ukraine lacks wisdom and hints at strategic implosion.

By Hamzah Rifaat
Global Research, March 28, 2023
Al Mayadeen English 25 March 2023

Region: Europe
Theme: Militarization and WMD, Police State & Civil Rights
In-depth Report: UKRAINE REPORT

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the Translate Website button below the author's name.

To receive Global Research's Daily Newsletter (selected articles), click here.

Click the share button above to email/forward this article to your friends and colleagues. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

***

Protests across Germany against weapons supplies to the Kiev regime reveal an important and strategically significant point that should not sidelined by those who continue to hold Russia solely responsible. Scenes of close to 13,000 anti-war protestors gathering at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin as well as across Germany also symbolize an acute understanding that exists in the German public that only dialogue and diplomacy, instead of camp politics and hegemony can resolve the Ukraine war. There is definitely a need to change course on Kiev.

These protests unfolded as the impasse in Ukraine is becoming unbearable. The war continues to fester in the absence of de-escalation calls and is further solidified as countries such as Germany sign off on € 8.9 million in arms exports in 2022, with a quarter of that amount heading straight to the Zelensky regime. The transnational nature of the conflict and various actors stepping in to prolong it, has resulted in the United States approving sales to countries such as Poland worth $10 Bn for interoperability. These hard facts continue to alarm pacifists and those vouching for negotiations with the Kremlin. Such state-sponsored war machineries remain unacceptable and the fact that this is coming from Berlin, which has historically adopted a nuanced foreign policy, is a cause for concern.

The protests are being spearheaded by figureheads such as Sahra Wagenknecht and veteran feminist campaigner, Alice Schwarzer, who are sending a clear signal that peace, amity, absence of hostilities and eschewing Cold War mentalities needs to take hold for a stable continent and world order. In a speech at the protest, Wagenknecht stated that a citizen's initiative was the need of the hour as well as a new, strong and impactful peace movement across Germany. She also pointed out how demonstrators were united over

grievances such as isolation and lack of representation by the Olaf Scholz administration. On the foreign policy front, the German public is also disillusioned by Foreign Minister Anna Baerbock's doctrine of providing unfettered access to weapons.

The truth is that if Germany wants to ensure that its social contract with the people is not eroded, but kept intact, the flawed policy-making of its government cannot bypass public sentiment which is geared against confrontation and cooperation. One should note that the messaging from the protestors indicates that there is a clear aversion to the entire orientation towards Ukraine by German policymakers. Messages such as 'Diplomats instead of Grenades', '*Stop the Killing*', '*Not My War, Not My Government*', and '*Helmets Today, Tanks Tomorrow, The Day After Tomorrow Your Sons*' reveal a clear disconnect between the official and societal stances to war. It is clear that taking sides in a conflict that has been the worst the world has seen since World War II is not the right strategy.

Interestingly but perhaps not surprisingly, the powers which are perpetuating this conflict have also been castigated by the German protestors. According to Nobert, a former soldier of the German Army, '*the real enemy sits in the city of London and New York*' which is a direct reference to two global financial centers in the United States and the United Kingdom which have remained at the forefront of perpetuating the conflict. Nobert further states that, Germany had no right to participate in another conflict and that too, after the Second World War. Such castigation from public spearheads in Germany comes amid the promotion of figures such as John Lennon and Mahatma Gandhi as symbols of peace.

The protests also underline public discontent over the possibility of a nuclear conflict in the post-Cold War/ World War II era. This becomes more likely with the Ukraine regime's adamancy in accessing weapons ranging from HIMARS to Leopard Tanks from Germany and Poland which threatens to upend the nuclear threshold. Deterrence stability which has been the hallmark of Europe in the post-World War scenario now remains increasingly vulnerable where the decision by either side to seek battlefield advantages that could involve nuclear weapons could result in catastrophic consequences for both the globe and the entire continent. For a continent and a country that has already borne the brunt of fascism, providing arms to Ukraine lacks wisdom and hints at strategic implosion.

To offset the crisis, Wagenknecht further said that the solution lies in offering Russia table talks where a never-ending war of attrition with the latest weaponry offers nothing but prolonged humanitarian suffering. The German public's commitment to the humanitarian cause is reflected in the publication of '*Manifest for Peace*' by Wagenknecht and Schwarzer, which urges Chancellor Olaf Scholz to change course on Kiev and prevent an escalation in weapons deliveries. 650,000 Germans including intellectuals and political figures signed the publication which is another example of the public's rejection of war. It also shows that Russia is a sovereign state should be considered a party to peace talks which goes against Kiev's vitriolic propaganda against Moscow.

The protests in Germany are a reminder that the Scholz administration must work towards peace instead of resorting to confrontation. As a great power in Europe with significant clout in international affairs, translating domestic sentiment into foreign policy will work well for Germany and aid the peacemaking process. It is high time to shelve nefarious policies, strategies and tactics for good.

*

Note to readers: Please click the share button above. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

Hamzah Rifaat is a broadcast journalist, analyst, and visiting fellow at the Stimson Center in Washington D.C., 2016.

Featured image is from AME

The original source of this article is Al Mayadeen English
Copyright © Hamzah Rifaat, Al Mayadeen English, 2023

Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page

Become a Member of Global Research

Articles by: Hamzah Rifaat

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca