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## *Fascist networks in German police and military issue new death threats*



Far-right-wing extremist chat groups involving members of the German military and security apparatus have been publicly exposed over recent days. At the same time, a growing number of threatening e-mails and faxes, almost all signed NSU 2.0, have been sent to left-wing artists, immigrants, politicians, journalists and lawyers. Social Democrat leader Saskia Esken recently received a death threat signed NSU 2.0. Many of the threats contain personal information about those targeted that is not publicly available. In at least three cases, the data was accessed from police computers.

The best-known case is of the lawyer Seda Basay-Yildiz, whose secret address was accessed on a police computer in Frankfurt. The lawyer, who represented some of the victims of the far-right National Socialist Underground (NSU) terrorist group, received a death threat several days later signed NSU 2.0.

*Der Spiegel* reported on July 29 that the police officer whose computer was used to access the data had not been seriously investigated, because another officer could have logged on to her computer with a password displayed nearby. On this basis, she was not initially considered a suspect. However, after officers found out that she was an active participant in a right-wing extremist chat group, they were finally compelled to launch an investigation against her.

The far-right group “Itiotentreff” was almost exclusively made up of police officers in the state of Hesse. A total of 102 pictures, caricatures and messages were shared, of which 40 were deemed to be relevant to the investigation by the state prosecutor. Group members made fun of disabled people, survivors of concentration camps, black people and Jews. The messages showing Alan Kurdi, the Syrian refugee child who drowned in 2015, were especially inhumane. “Whoever finds it can keep it” was written beneath the picture of his lifeless body on a Turkish beach.

The chat group had an openly fascist character and aimed to serve as a platform for sharing right-wing extremist material and possibly planning acts of violence, apparently all under the protection of the security agencies and local politicians from the government parties.

One of the group’s members lived in 2018 in Kirtorf, a stronghold of the far-right that has played host to several right-wing extremist major events since the turn of the century. In addition, a search of the home of another police officer in Kirtorf in late 2018 uncovered a collection of Nazi memorabilia that investigators described as a “Nazi museum.” The mayor of Kirtorf at the time, Ulrich Künz (Christian Democrats), justified the find by saying that it is normal for people to collect historical material. He described the Nazi memorabilia collector and his brother, who was also a police officer in Hesse, as “nice guys, friendly, very integrated into clubs and associations.”

This is just one example of the building up of far-right structures within the state apparatus. Across Germany, new far-right networks are continually being exposed, from “Revolution Chemnitz” in Saxony, to the chat group led by the special forces soldier Andre S., better known as “Hannibal,” and the nationwide far-right Telegram chat group #WIR.

On July 23, *Die Zeit* published extracts from these chats in an article headlined “Soldiers who are planning a revolt.” The author and right-wing extremist expert Christian Fuchs

wrote that among #WIR's members, which at times totalled around 240, were "several soldiers, reservists and army veterans."

According to his research, several right-wing extremist and neo-Nazi members of the army are active in the #WIR chat group. One member was Hartmut T., who holds at least the rank of sergeant in the military. In the Telegram group, he has been presented a series of awards for parachuting and individual bravery during his 12-year career as a soldier, is stationed at an army air base in the Lüneburg region and is now a member of the rapid response division. This unit is part of the same division as the special forces (KSK), which was so heavily infiltrated by right-wing extremists that Defence Minister Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer felt compelled to restructure the force last month.

Like the network organised by Hannibal in the KSK, the #WIR network also planned to murder left-wing figures and establish a fascist regime in Germany on "Day X."

Hartmut T. wrote in the #WIR chat, among other things, "Can you add me to the group Antifa Reconnaissance? I want to know who my enemies are...so I can take action against these terrorists." Another contribution cited by *Die Zeit* underscores just how concrete the plans for a far-right revolt were. "Patriots" must now "keep themselves safe" so that "when the first wave is over with, we can rebuild our country," wrote T. in November 2019.

The author of the article in *Die Zeit* adds, "These statements were made in November 2019, so the 'wave' has nothing to do with the coronavirus; it probably refers to the initial phase after a putsch."

The material presented by Fuchs leaves no doubt about the group's fascist outlook, its close ties to the German army and other European militaries, and its plans for a violent putsch. "Anti-Semitic slogans and racist violent fantasies" were among the messages shared, as well as "free social national."

Andreas E., another group member, was, "according to his own admission," active for five years in the French Foreign Legion in French Guyana, Congo and Papua New Guinea.

Another member of the group was Heiko Herbert G., who according to Fuchs is a member of the military reserves, Lower Saxony group. In December 2019, he directed a threat to anti-fascists, "It's not enough just to slap those guys in the face! I don't want to write any more about it."

The plans were apparently far advanced, and links had already been established with other far-right groups. "My preparations are complete. Own weapons, fighting gear, civil war,"

wrote Heiko Herbert G. in the chat group. He has everything “up to calibre 38–45.” In addition, the reservist posted a picture “of a mountain of rucksacks, helmets and a sleeping bag with German army insignia.”

One of the administrators of #WIR was Marion G., who consciously wanted to bring together “patriots...and National Socialists.” She was an alleged supporter of “the right-wing extremist terrorist S Group,” whose members were arrested by the police in February. But Marion G. “remained free” and “continued to be active in the digital underground.” And this in spite of the fact that the S Group was reportedly on the brink of striking.

According to a report in *Der Spiegel* in February, the group had already hoarded weaponry and munitions and planned in a concerted “military” action to launch attacks on mosques across Germany and kill Muslims as they prayed. The goal was to provoke a counter-response and a “civil war.” The investigating state prosecutor summarised the group’s aim as having been the “rattling” and “overcoming” of the Federal Republic’s state structure and social order.

The fascist networks in the German security forces are now so widespread and threatening that the *New York Times* felt compelled for the second time in a few weeks to warn of the danger of a right-wing putsch. After an initial article on July 3, the *Times* wrote last weekend about the plans for “Day X” of the Northern Cross group, which emerged out of the network operated by Hannibal. “Increasingly, the German authorities consider the scenario a pretext for domestic terrorism by far-right plotters or even for a takeover of the government,” wrote the *Times*.

It may well be the case that sections of the state apparatus and government are troubled by the putsch plans and terrorist activities. But the fact is that there is no force within the political establishment or state, including the judiciary, investigative authorities, and political parties, capable of or willing to deal with the far-right threat. The strengthening of far-right terrorist networks in the police, military and intelligence agencies is directly linked to the German bourgeoisie’s return to militarism and war. The only way to stop the right-wing extremist terrorists is through the independent mobilisation of the working class on the basis of a socialist programme.

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