

Sahra Wagenknecht on Ukraine: Diplomacy instead of Weapons

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Sahra Wagenknecht: Dear friends, dear friends of peace, I am so glad that you have all gathered here today. And I know that many thousands are also following our rally on various livestreams. I think today you can tell how many we are. From now on, we will raise our voice so loudly that it cannot be ignored. Because dear friends, we are not only many, we are now beginning to organise, because Germany at last needs a really strong peace movement again. You all have been following what happened when Alice Schwarzer and I, together with 69 first signatories, published our Manifesto for Peace. A veritable hysteria erupted in parts of the public German politics and media.

What were we not accused of, what have we not been accused of, us and thus also, of course, the more than six hundred thousand signatories of our manifesto. We must be cynical, unprincipled, amoral, Putin's henchmen, possibly even paid by Putin. And yet people have not been discouraged, they have signed our manifesto. Every day there are more and more who sign the manifesto. And I have to say once again: This is wonderful of all of you. A heartfelt thank you.

I mean the campaign against us, it culminated with their attempt to place us near the extreme right. That shows how sick the discussion in Germany has become. Since when is the call for peace, the call for diplomacy and negotiations right-wing? And warmongering is then probably left-wing. It seems that some people have completely lost their political compass. And I repeat in all clarity, just to deter all those who want to disseminate this everywhere again, as it actually goes without saying, but I say it again anyway. Of course, neo-Nazis and Reichsbürger, who are in the tradition of regimes that are responsible for the worst world wars in human history, have no place at our peace rally. But that goes without saying, I thought.

But I also believe that everyone who honestly wants to demonstrate with us for peace and negotiations is welcome here. And there should not be such a foolish debate. It annoys me, at what level discussions are held in Germany in the meantime. It is really unutterable. And I think, I would like to say that again, if we are already talking about "Rechtsoffenheit" ("openness towards the right") - that is a term that has been used quite frequently in the

run-up to the demonstration. If we are already talking about "Rechtsoffenheit", then the warmongers ought to take a good look at themselves. People who have no shame in associating themselves with others who worship real Nazis. I am thinking, for example, of the former ruffian, ambassador and deputy foreign minister of Ukraine, Mr. Melnyk. He makes no secret of it at all. Melnyk and other leaders of that country do not hide the fact that they consider, for example, Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera a national hero. And I remind you, Bandera, the anti-Semite, is partly responsible for the murder of thousands of Jews, Poles and Russians. And this man is worshipped by Melnyk and others. And our warmongers are associating with them and telling us something about cross-front and "Rechtsoffenheit". What kind of mendacious debate is this? I would like to express this clearly once again.

But the hysterical roar, the hysterical roar in parts of politics and the media also shows, of course: They are really afraid of us. They are afraid of a new peace movement. And in my opinion, they have a good reason to be. They are afraid that they will no longer be able to continue their policy without further ado. And I say to you, yes, that is exactly why we are here. So that you can't continue this policy. So there you go, if you're afraid, that's a compliment to all of us.

There is a lot at stake. It certainly amounts to a lot. It's about ending the terrible suffering and dying in Ukraine, for one thing. It's about making Russia an offer to negotiate, rather than ammunitioning an endless war of attrition with more and more new weapons. I mean, you have to imagine this. The White House, Joe Biden, has contracted with arms companies for many years, contracted for many years that they would supply Ukraine with weapons. For many years, the war machine is to be ammunitioned so that it does not run out of weapons. What kind of insane and cynical policy is that? And then they pretend that this is solidarity with Ukraine. What kind of lie is that? That is not solidarity. It is the exact opposite.

Because solidarity, that is perfectly clear. Solidarity would be doing everything to stop the dying. Solidarity means saving lives, not destroying lives. Solidarity means working for peace and not for war. And for doing so, you don't need tanks. It takes diplomacy, negotiation and a willingness to compromise on both sides. That's what you need. That is being solidary.

And yes, of course, I am saying that too. Of course, this appeal also extends to the Russian President. Of course, Putin has to be ready for negotiations and compromises, too. Ukraine should not become a Russian protectorate. But after all the reports about the peace negotiations in spring - and at that time the then Israeli Prime Minister Bennett had been involved, as well as the Turkish Government - after all the reports about the negotiations back then, one has to say, obviously, the negotiations did not fail because of the Russians. And that is also part of the truth, I think.

Now, it's about stopping the dying in Ukraine. But it is also about more. That has already been mentioned here. It's also about eliminating the risk of this war spreading to all of Europe, possibly to the whole world, this risk. And it is a very great risk. We have all seen

that the impact of a Ukrainian missile in Poland at the time, which was initially presented as a Russian missile, led in fact the first madmen to demand that article 5 of the NATO treaty should be applied. And we all know about the possibility of a Russian missile - even accidentally - striking beyond Ukraine. And what happens then? Do we then have to apply article 5? Do we have a world war? In other words, with every day that this war is prolonged and with every additional lethal weapon that we deliver into this powder keg, the danger of a major war grows throughout Europe and possibly throughout the world. We must put an end to this at all costs. We are standing here today against this, because this is an irresponsible development that urgently requires to end.

And we are then told, this is all Putin propaganda?! No, my friends, even the UN Secretary General Guterres has recently warned very clearly that the world is about to enter into a great war with eyes wide open. Is Guterres also a Putin propagandist? Good God, how can one close one's eyes like that! How can one be so inebriated with war that one does not recognize this danger? it's real madness to take such a stand.

Or maybe some think, Oh, we have to accept this danger heroically, because we are fighting for the good and on the right side of history. And to those who say that, I would like to reply clearly: No, anyone who accepts the danger of a nuclear inferno is not on the right side of history. And anyone who does not do everything in his power to avert the danger of such an escalation is not fighting for the good, but is irresponsible.

The nuclear war clock, the nuclear war clock is currently at 90 seconds to twelve. The scientists who are in charge of this clock have recently set it forward again. Doesn't the federal government care about that at all? Never before, not even during the Cold War, has the world been so close to the threshold of a nuclear inferno. And that is also why we are here today. Because this cannot continue. That nuclear clock has got to go back, for God's sake! It has to get further away from twelve o'clock, not closer and closer to it.

I still remember my childhood and youth quite well. These were the eighties of the twentieth century. It was a time when rocket deployments in Germany were being discussed and star war programs were being discussed all over the world. I grew up with the fear of great war, with the fear of a mushroom cloud over Berlin. And I can still remember how grateful I was when with Mikhail Gorbachev a new era began. A time of disarmament talks and disarmament treaties. And that was a time when one had the feeling: yes, this is the beginning of a new era, an era of disarmament, cooperation and common security!. I admit, I had almost forgotten over the years, what it felt like to be afraid of war. Today, I remember. Today, 30 years after Gorbachev, Putin has just put on hold the last disarmament treaty still in force, the START treaty. This was done after the US had cancelled the ABM Treaty, the INF Treaty and the Open Sky Treaty. Today, no one talks about disarmament anymore. Instead, we are now modernising our nuclear arsenals and arming ourselves for all we're worth. Today politicians of our country, which owes its reunification to Gorbachev, intend to ruin Russia. German battle tanks are to shoot at Russian soldiers again. And at least Melnyk is certain that fighter

jets will soon be delivered as well. Dear friends, we have to stop this madness. This is why we are here today.

Dear friends, we live in an Orwellian world. What kind of stories are we being told? Tanks create peace, weapons save lives, and Ukrainian oligarch capitalism, which is just as corrupt as Russian capitalism, is supposedly fighting for our freedom and democracy. Even George Orwell knew that if everyone believed the lies that were spread, then the lies would go down in history and become the truth. And that's why we state clearly: we don't believe your lies anymore. We know that weapons kill and tanks are for waging war.

And we also know, we also know that our freedom will not be defended in Ukraine, just as it was not defended in the Hindu Kush before. And this war is not about noble values either, it's about NATO and the scope of the American zone of influence. And for that reason we are gathered here, so that this senseless dying can be stopped. And we are also here because we do not feel represented by the German government. We don't feel represented by a Green foreign minister who is stomping around the international arena like a bull in a china store and has so little control over her public statements that she accidentally declares war on Russia. No, we do not feel represented by Ms. Baerbock.

And we don't feel represented by Panzer Toni and all the "green" gun freaks, giving the impression that they would sooner rather than later take on Russia themselves in a loaded Leopard tank. What kind of debate is this? Petra Kelly would look away in disgust from that party. That has to be stated clearly here. And dear friends, we don't feel represented by an arms lobbyist like Strack-Zimmermann, who obviously cares more about the business balance sheet of Rheinmetall and Co. than the fate of the people in Ukraine or even world peace. No, we do not feel represented by this woman and by an FDP where all other Strack-Zimmermanns set the tone. But we also don't feel represented by a chancellor who, while always hesitating at first and promoting prudence and caution, nevertheless regularly buckles before the war hawks in his coalition and crosses one red line after the next. No, Mr. Scholz, we don't feel represented by you either. Because that represents fatal politics.

We do not want German tanks to shoot at the great-grandchildren of those Russian women and men whose great-grandparents were actually murdered by the Wehrmacht in a bestial way by the millions. We don't want their great-grandchildren to be shot at again with German weapons, which is another reason why we came together. Because it really is completely oblivious of history. Do they not even remember what German history once was?

Excuse me, we have an emergency operation here. Please make room for him to pass. This is very important, I would just like to say in between.

And we, dear friends, we also don't want, that's another reason why we are here, that Germany allows itself to be dragged further and further into this war. Until the war

potentially arrives here. We certainly don't want that, and that's what we're fighting against. And that's why we are here in such large numbers. No! Stop it! No more war!

We stick to the opinion of the great pacifist writer Bertha von Suttner, who once wrote: It will not occur to any sensible person to want to wipe away ink stains with ink, oil stains with oil. Only blood, that shall always be washed away with blood. No, dear friends, we do not want that. Let us stop the bloodshed. We stand up for peace and against war. We are here and we will not disappear. Today, we give the starting signal for a new, strong peace movement in Germany. Thank you very much..

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