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Peter Schwarz
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German Foreign Minister Baerbock and US Secretary of State Blinken intensify warmongering against Russia

Sabre rattling against Russia and expressions of mutual friendship were the focus of the inaugural visit by German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock to Washington on January 5. The Green Party politician and her American counterpart Antony Blinken outbid each other with threats against Moscow.



Secretary of State Antony Blinken speaks during a news conference with German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock at the State Department, Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2022, in Washington [Credit: Mandel Ngan/Pool via AP]

“Russian trade is marked with a clear price tag,” warned Baerbock. A violation of Ukrainian sovereignty would have “grave consequences” for Russia. Tension is increasing worldwide—and especially on the border with Ukraine. It is “therefore important that we as Europeans work together with our American friends,” she added. Now is the opportunity to renew the transatlantic friendship.

“Dear Tony”—as Baerbock called her American colleague—threatened Russia with harsh economic sanctions in the event of a military escalation in eastern Ukraine. “And that’s not just the position of the United States and Germany,” he emphasized. “It is the collective position of many countries, allies and partners that have come together.”

Moscow has the choice of continuing to pursue an aggressive policy or taking a diplomatic path, said Blinken. In the first case, there must be quick and “major” consequences. The controversial Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline, which has been completed but not yet approved, is a lever in the hands of the Europeans. It is difficult to imagine that in this case gas will flow through the pipeline.

Baerbock, who had already spoken out against the commissioning of Nord Stream 2 during the election campaign, indirectly agreed with him.

With her aggressive stance against Russia, Baerbock is following in the footsteps of the last Green Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, who held the office from 1998 to 2005. At the time of the Rambouillet Conference, Fischer, in close cooperation with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, constructed the pretext for the NATO war against Serbia, an ally of Russia.

Fischer and Albright relied on the UÇK leader and later President of Kosovo Hashim Thaçi, who was implicated in organized crime and serious war crimes—which did not prevent them from portraying the war as a campaign for human rights. Meanwhile, Thaçi is facing charges at The Hague for war crimes and crimes against humanity in connection with the war.

In 2014, the Greens and their Heinrich Böll Foundation actively fueled the Maidan protests, which served as a cover to overthrow Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich with the help of right-wing extremists and replace him with a nationalist, pro-Western

regime. Despite the central role that fascist forces played in this coup, the Greens glorified it as a democratic revolution.

Since then, NATO has been systematically using the conflict in Ukraine to put pressure on Russia and further encircle it militarily. In doing so, NATO consciously accepts the risk that Europe will become the focus of a war that would wipe out a large part of its population.

Baerbock seamlessly embraced this policy and disguised it with hollow phrases about “Western values” and “human rights.” After her appointment as Foreign Minister, she announced that she would pursue a “value-based foreign policy.” She also emphasized this in Washington.

Germany will use its chairmanship in the G7 group of the leading western industrial nations this year to “strengthen democracies,” announced Baerbock. It wants to show that the economic success of the G7 states is linked to their democratic and constitutional governments and their advocacy of fair rules.

This coincides with the rhetoric of the Biden administration, which portrays its campaign against Russia and China as a struggle between democracy and autocracy.

Just how false this rhetoric is can be seen by the fact that Baerbock visited Washington on the eve of the one-year anniversary of the storming of the Capitol on January 6, 2021. The attempt by US President Donald Trump to overturn the election by means of a coup and to establish a personalist dictatorship failed by a hair’s breadth and exposed the rottenness of American democracy.

Nothing about that has changed under Biden. His government is neither willing nor able to oppose the coup plotters. Trump and the masterminds of the conspiracy in the state apparatus, in the military and in the Republican Party will not be held responsible and have been left to prepare for the next coup unhindered. The reason for this lies in the class character of the Democratic Party, which—like the German “traffic light” coalition government—represents the interests of the stock exchange, corporations and the affluent middle class. Since it is waging a war against the working class, it must downplay the danger of dictatorship in order to prevent a social explosion.

The decline of American democracy is also directly linked to the criminal wars that the United States has waged over the past 30 years with German and European support and that have destroyed and devastated entire societies in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria. The growing escalation of the conflict with Russia, and especially with China, threatens to plunge humanity into a third world war that it will not survive.

Despite all the expressions of friendship during Baerbock's visit, tensions between the US, Germany and other European powers are also growing. As in the First and Second World Wars, Germany regards Eastern Europe and Russia as its preferred area of influence and expansion, as a source of cheap labour and raw materials, and as a destination for investment. Therefore, it views US activities with suspicion.

It is known that Chancellor Olaf Scholz and large sections of German big business want to stick to Nord Stream 2. Without Russian gas supplies, Germany will not be able to meet its energy needs in the coming years if it abandons nuclear energy and coal-fired power generation. Within the traffic light coalition, considerable effort has been required to publicly suppress the conflict over Nord Stream 2.

German and European politicians have repeatedly voiced the fear that Biden and Putin could come to an agreement over the heads of the Europeans. The German Foreign Minister also publicly warned Blinken in Washington that there could be "no decision on security in Europe without Europe." The "involvement of the European states concerned" is "central" in upcoming talks.

Blinken assured her that this would not be the case: "When it comes to questions of European security, there will be no Europe without Europe." But several competing rounds of negotiations with Russia are planned.

A high-ranking Franco-German delegation travelled to Moscow for a meeting on Thursday. Its aim is to try to get the Normandy format going again, in which Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine negotiated without the United States. A special online meeting of NATO foreign ministers took place on Friday. On Monday, bilateral talks between Russia and the US begin in Geneva, which Biden and Putin agreed on at their summit in the summer.

The danger that the mounting tensions between the great powers lead to war, as in 1914 and 1939, is growing day by day. Only an independent, socialist movement of the international working class can stop the warmongers.

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