

I. Security and Peace Initiatives

German Citizens Rally Against NATO War; World Peace Movement Grows

by Karel Vereycken

PARIS, Feb. 26—If you listened only to international news agencies such as AP, AFP, Reuters, the German dpa, etc., nearly all the people on the planet, “from Seoul, Paris, Brazil, Bangkok, Brussels and beyond,” called for more arms to Ukraine, and more war, on the occasion of the Feb. 24 one-year anniversary of the Russian military action.

This media hype was part of moves orchestrated

dozens of other cities throughout that nation, and many others of the Trans-Atlantic nations in mid-February and ongoing. Germans traveled from all over the country to the capital, especially from the former East Germany, gathering at the Brandenburg Gate, in response to the call in recent weeks for a demonstration, organized by feminist author Alice Schwarzer, Sahra Wagenknecht of *Die Linke* (the Left Party), and collabo-



EIRNS/Pia Schlanger

A dramatic *Aufstand für Frieden* (Rise Up For Peace) rally of 50,000 took place in Berlin on Feb. 25, 2023—one of dozens of rallies in cities throughout Germany and many other trans-Atlantic nations.

by Global NATO power circles to hijack growing citizen upset by staging fake demonstrations and stunts to “blame Putin,” show “solidarity with the Ukrainian people,” endorse NATO expansion eastward and into the Pacific, increase weapons supplies to Ukraine, and deepen sanctions against Russia.

All this utterly failed in Germany, as seen in the dramatic peace rally *Aufstand für Frieden* (Rise Up For Peace) of 50,000 people in **Berlin** Feb. 25, and in

rators. There were speakers, banners, and future plans were announced to expand action.

The spectacular German demonstration marks a breakout toward a world movement for peace negotiations and collaboration to work on means and principles for a new world framework for economic development and security—the basis for a durable peace. The hundreds of rallies this month in the North Atlantic countries are a rejection, in its home territory, of the



EIRNS/Pia Schlanger

A Berlin demonstrator with a sign reading, in Latin, *Dona Nobis Pacem* (Give Us Peace).

NATO war machine.

Over the weekend, over 100 rallies took place in Germany alone, and hundreds of demonstrations—large and small—in other nations, including in Italy (Genoa and Milan), France (Paris), Denmark (Copenhagen), and even in the geo-political ground-zero centers of Belgium (Brussels) and the UK (London). Today, an anti-NATO rally was set for Ramstein, the German city where the Ukraine Defense Group is headquartered at the huge U.S. Air Base.

The cross-fire of messages of support among all these events is significant. The motion follows along from the Feb. 19 “Rage Against the War Machine” rally in Washington, which had over 3,000 demonstrators at the Lincoln Memorial. Other anti-NATO rallies in the Americas have been taking place all week, including in Mexico City (Feb. 19,) Los Angeles (Feb. 18), Austin, Texas (Feb. 23), Montreal, Canada (Feb. 25), and many more.

In **Berlin**, an attempt was made Feb. 24 for a showy EU/NATO Solidarity with Ukraine support rally, played up by the media to overshadow the peace rally the next day, but this tactic utterly failed. In numbers, the police reported the Feb. 24 arms-to-Ukraine event

had 10,000 attendees, far short of the 50,000 the next day at the Rise Up For Peace rally. Moreover, an intended stunt against Russia backfired Feb. 24.

The sick scheme for the Solidarity with Ukraine rally was that marchers would parade past various landmarks in the city, like the Brandenburg Gate and Unter den Linden Avenue—location of the U.S., UK and other embassies—until they came upon a display of a Russian T-72 tank, damaged in Ukraine, with its cannon aimed directly at the Russian embassy. Intending to deride Russia, the rally group had won a court case to get permission to haul the tank in on a flatbed truck, just for the Feb. 24 weekend.

But word went out, and within hours Saturday morning, the tank was covered in flowers (in memory of Russian soldiers). It was the NATO schemers who were humiliated.



EIRNS/Birgitta Gründler

A Berlin peace demonstrator with a sign in Chinese thanking Wang Yi and the Chinese people for their Ukraine peace initiative.

Enough Is Enough!

The current earthquake has been building over time in Germany, and across Europe. Economic conditions are worsening, including the exploding inflation in consumer prices, and the shutdown of firms lacking Russian or any other energy supplies. And there is the arrogance from Washington, London and Brussels, expecting Germany and other nations to be vassals, subservient in every way to Global NATO military and economic orders. There was the blatant destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines last

September, now revealed by investigative journalist Seymour Hersh to be an act of war by U.S. President Joe Biden against Germany, a supposed ally of the Atlantic Alliance and NATO.

On Feb. 24, the French daily *Le Monde*, a backer of NATO against Russia, gave back-handed recognition to the shift in mood against NATO, in an article headlined, “Western Objections to Supporting Ukraine Are Limited but Growing.” Like an “early warning,” *Le Monde* bemoans the fact that German public opinion is moving against continued backing of Ukraine in the proxy war on Russia, which can be contrasted with the sheepish

outlook in Britain. According to a poll taken Oct. 31, 2022, 6 out of 10 British subjects approved of British aid to Ukraine, but already then, things were radically different in Germany. Today, according to an ARD poll conducted in February, “58% of those surveyed” in Germany “considered Berlin’s diplomatic efforts to end the war to be insufficient—17 points higher than in June 2022.”

Le Monde further reports on the situation inside Germany:

The East-West divide is very clear. In its survey in early February, the Allensbach Institute asked the question, “Should Ukraine give up resisting Russia and stop fighting?” In the western regions, 20% of respondents answered yes. In those of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR), 41%. In this part of the country that was in the Soviet sphere of influence and where the most Russophile parties of the German political spectrum enjoy the strongest support—Die Linke on the far left, and the AfD on the far right—more than three-quarters of respondents are in favor of an immediate ceasefire and the opening of peace negotiations, believing that the priority is to stop the fighting. In the West, 58% hold this view.

Already in October 2022, the eastern city of Stralsund offered its City Hall for peace negotiations over Ukraine. An old Hanseatic town, Stralsund is famous for serving as a peace venue way back in 1370, when the “Stralsund Peace” resolved a war between Denmark and the Hanseatic League. The Oct. 2022 initiative of Stralsund sparked a multi-nation collaboration of mayors demanding peace talks begin over Ukraine.

Ten thousand people turned out Feb. 18 in **Munich** to protest the domination of the Munich Security Council meeting by hysterical war hawks. The exception was Wang Yi, China’s highest ranked diplomat, who called for negotiations. On Feb. 24, China released a 12 point program for recommendations on how talks can proceed. [See elsewhere in this issue.]



EIRNS/Werner Zuse

Ten thousand demonstrators turned out Feb. 18 in Munich, Germany to protest the domination of the Munich Security Council meeting by hysterical anti-Russia war hawks.

At the **Berlin** rally, activists from the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo), the political party whose Chairwoman is Helga Zepp-LaRouche—and other friends of the international LaRouche movement in Germany—who have fueled this dialogue process with calls for action, and with crucial information and analysis, reported that its leaflets were snatched out of their hands when they addressed demonstrators with the ideas: “No more weapons deliveries! Germany out of NATO! No more war escalation! Global security architecture!” Zepp-LaRouche is also the founder of the Schiller Institute.

Manifesto for Peace

Crucial to the **Berlin** rally is the fact that the Manifesto for Peace, issued Feb. 10 by Schwarzer and Wagenknecht, had gathered 600,000 signatures by Feb. 25. It states that even if Ukraine can win individual battles, Ukraine cannot win a war against the world’s largest nuclear weapons power. The war must end at the negotiating table. But, negotiating does not mean capitulating:

Negotiating means making compromises on both sides. With the aim of preventing hundreds of thousands more deaths and worse. We think so too, and half of the German population thinks so too. It’s time to listen to us!

We call on the Chancellor to stop the escala-



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A Manifesto for Peace issued Feb. 10 by Sahra Wagenknecht of Die Linke (the Left Party) (l.) and feminist author Alice Schwarzer (r.)—organizers of the Berlin rally—had garnered 600,000 signatures by Feb. 25.

tion in arms deliveries. Now! He should lead a strong alliance for a ceasefire and peace negotiations at the German and at the European level. Now! Because every lost day costs up to 1,000 more lives—and brings us closer to a third World War.

The Manifesto has been signed by well-known personalities, including Peter Brandt, the son of former chancellor Willy Brandt, famous for his *Ostpolitik* of détente; the political scientist Dr. Christoph Butterwegge, Professor of Political Science at the University of Köln; Holger Friedrich, publisher of three Berlin newspapers; Margot Käßmann, a Lutheran theologian; Oskar Lafontaine, a former left-wing politician; Reinhard Mey, a German singer-songwriter; Martin Sonneborn, Member of the European Parliament and founder and Chairman of Die PARTEI; Dr. Jürgen Todenhöfer, a politician; and Brig.-General (ret.) Erich Vad, a former military advisor to Chancellor Angela Merkel. Ninety percent of the media have been trying to discredit this Manifesto and the German weekly *Der Spiegel* announced a “counter-manifesto.”

Among those speaking at the Saturday event in Berlin were actress Corinna Kirchhoff; long-time peace activist and educator Hans-Peter Waldrich; Brig. Gen. (ret.) Erich Vad; Sahra Wagenknecht; and Alice Schwarzer. At the beginning, a greeting message from U.S. economist Jeffrey Sachs was aired. On-site organizers re-

ported “thunderous applause” against Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Free Democratic Party Member of the Bundestag Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann.

As Schwarzer’s magazine *EMMA* notes, reporting on recent polls, more than half of Germans are against further arms deliveries to Ukraine and are in favor of peace negotiations. For the media, this opposition was originating supposedly only from right wing and xenophobic quarters. *EMMA*:

Do Alice Schwarzer and Sahra Wagenknecht have to distance themselves from the right? No, because they have nothing whatsoever to do with the right.

Can right-wingers sign the Manifesto for Peace? Yes, because change.org doesn’t do any mind-checks. Can they come to the rally? Yes, because being right-wing is not written on your face. But the organizers will not tolerate any party political propaganda or provocations!



EIRNS/Alan Rivera

The Schiller Institute’s Feb. 19, 2023 anti-war rally at the Benito Juárez monument in Mexico City was joined by enthusiastic Free Assange activists and youth organizers from President López Obrador’s MORENA party. Their big signs included, “Citizens of the World Unite, Stop Nuclear War! For a New Economic Order.”

The rallies in many other German cities were very powerful, whatever their size. The **Bonn** rally Feb. 25 afternoon had 300 people. The Schiller Institute banner, “Helga Zepp-LaRouche: Peace Is Called Development,” had a strong effect. In Köln, the crowd in the early evening numbered over 700. Margot Käßmann, the prominent Lutheran leader, spoke at both of them.

Italy: Return of a Culture of Peace

“In the streets of Italian cities, few buildings display the Ukrainian flag as a sign of solidarity,” complained the same Feb. 24 *Le Monde* article, warning about the growing opposition to backing Ukraine and NATO. It continued,

seven events and demonstrations took place all over Italy including Genoa, Rome, Milan, Florence, Pisa and Lecce. Milan and Genoa had the largest crowds, but, the Florence demonstration, organized by the Trade Union CGIL, drew some 2,000 people.

The “Stop the War” coalition saw Italy as the start of a Europe-wide weekend of action, beginning Friday, Feb. 24 with a 24-kilometer march from Perugia to Assisi. Raffaella Bolini of the Italian peace movement estimated that the weekend would see protests in at least 100 towns and cities, saying: “Feeling in Italy is running high against supplying arms to Ukraine. The movement is mobilizing everywhere.”

In what appeared to some as a surprise, it was re-



The anti-war demonstration in Florence, Italy, organized by the trade union CGIL, drew some 2,000.



MoviSol/Bruno Romano

In Rome, the well-known prosecutor Antonio Ingroia, founder of the Sovereign and Popular Democratic Party, addressed about 1,000 demonstrators Feb. 25, 2023: “Our task is to unite all anti-system forces. We represent ... the majority of Italians who do not want this war, and who do not want to be a colony of the U.S. and NATO.”

On the other hand, on the facades of town halls and trade union premises or hanging from apartment windows, a banner associated with Italian pacifism since the Cold War has made a comeback: the rainbow flag, stamped with the Italian word “*pace*” (“peace”). In the face of the Russian invasion, a movement that is more powerful in Italy than elsewhere in Europe has been expressing a principled pacifism whose roots have as much to do with the influence of the Catholic Church as with the enduring legacy of what was once the most powerful Communist Party in the Western world.

According to the Italian Peace Movement, forty-

ported that 10,000 people occupied streets in **Genoa** Feb. 25 organized by the Autonomous Collective of Dock Workers (CALP) and Unione Sindicale di Basi (USB). According to an article posted to *news.italy24*, in the port city of Genoa, “ten thousand people demonstrated from the gates of Ponte Etiopia on Lungomare Canepa up to Piazza De Ferrari, filling it.” Slogans included: “Stop the weapons smuggling at the ports” and “Reduce weapons, increase wages,” clearly linking the fight for peace with the fight for social justice and against the war economy.

Said one of the protesters:

We know well that the problem is something else, and it is this system that produces this war.

We are workers, students, we are different souls. As the polls also show, there is 60% of Italians who are against the sending of arms and against this military adventure

Said another:

We are convinced that the lifting of sanctions against Russia and the end of this useless conflict is an urgent need. Our vision is to restore relations with our Russian friends and work for the good of the world.

The Saturday action in **Rome** is significant, though much smaller than many other cities. The Sovereign and Popular Democracy party, an organizer of the event in the city center raised the slogan “No to war! No to NATO!” Other slogans on the podium were: “Save Italy! No to Sanctions! No to Weapons! No to High Energy Bills!”

Antonio Ingroia, a well-known prosecutor and one of the party’s founders, addressed the crowd, saying: “Our task is to unite all anti-system forces. We represent the feelings and thoughts of the majority of Italians who do not want this war, who do not want to be a colony of the United States and NATO.” Prosecutor Ingroia has spoken at several of the Schiller Institute’s international dialogue events and sent a message to the Feb. 19 Rage Against the War Machine demonstration in Washington.

Also in Rome, about 1,000 participated at a torchlight vigil organized by the Europe for Peace network, demanding a ceasefire now and negotiations. Participating were more mainstream groups such as Rete Italiana Disarmo, and the CGIL union. The poster on the podium of the demonstration said, “Immediate Ceasefire!” and “Europe for Peace!” To be noted is that the Community of Sant’Egidio, an international lay Catholic association dedicated to social service, joined the mobilization.

A *Vatican News* broadcast today said that more people came out in Rome than were expected, marching through the *Fori Imperiali* to the Roman Colosseum, which was illuminated in the colors of the Ukrainian flag marking the one year anniversary of the Russian military action. Sant’Egidio founder Prof. Andrea Riccardi gave an [interview](#) Feb. 23 to Fanpage.it, focusing on the role the Pope can play as peace mediator. Riccardi said that “the war in Ukraine is becoming

eternal,” and the Pope could play an important mediation role to at least obtain a ceasefire. “He has the authority and ability to do so.”

Said Maurizio Landini, a socialist in Rome:

We represent the majority of public opinion that does not want war but wants peace. We are not only pacifists, we are radically against any war and the goal we want to achieve is to overcome war as an instrument for regulating conflicts between states.

The Feb. 24 *Le Monde* article reported on the pre-disposition of Italy to want the Ukraine war ended by peace talks. *Le Monde* wrote:

[Italy has] a deep-rooted pacifist political culture, illustrated even in the Constitution, Article 11 of which states that Italy “renounces war ... as a means of settling international disputes.” Associated with the disastrous military adventures of fascist Italy, the phenomenon of waging war is reduced, for large sections of Italian opinion, to a “useless slaughter,” in the words of Pope Francis regarding the Ukrainian conflict. The Ukrainian defense against Russian aggression is perceived by many as an obstacle to the return of peace.

France

While France has seen in recent weeks three demonstrations bringing between 1-2 million people on the streets to reject President Emmanuel Macron’s proposal of pension reform, and on issues of war and peace, the country remains divided and confused. This situation, of course, is exploited by the war party. Following intense media brainwashing, and with turncoats such as Jean-Luc Mélenchon and Marine Le Pen changing positions overnight, all parties and unions are split on the Ukraine issue.

In **Paris**, two opposing demonstrations took place on Saturday at the same time, happily enough in different locations. On the one side, marching from the Bastille to the Place de la République, was a pro-war demonstration led by the “French Network of Solidarity with Ukraine” and the “Union of Ukrainians of France,” which claims that some 110,000 Ukrainians have arrived in France since February 2022, mostly mothers with children.

This march, which may have had a couple hundred participants, was energetically organized by the leadership of the French anti-Wall Street/City of London movement, Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions and for Citizens' Actions (ATTAC) and vigorously supported by the French Human Rights League (LDH), whose President Patrick Baudoin said in the French daily *Libération* that Russia is abducting Ukrainian children.

From the political spectrum, the march was supported by a weird coalition composed of Macron's Renaissance Party, the French Green Party (EELV) and the extreme left Trotskyite New Anti-Capitalist Party (NPA) of Philippe Poutou. Raquel Garrido, a Deputy in the National Assembly, came to the rally, she said, to represent "the entire parliamentary group *La France Insoumise* (French equivalent of *Die Linke* in Germany). Ukraine's ambassador to France, Vadym Omelchenko, and representatives of Georgia, Poland, and various Baltic nations were also expected to speak at the event.

Similar pro-NATO events took place or were staged in some 15 other cities, including Clermont-Ferrand, Dijon, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Rennes, and Tours, and using the Feb. 24 anniversary date to exploit people's emotions of empathy for the suffering Ukrainians, to brainwash them even more into accepting weapon shipments to Ukraine and sacrificing in name of the war economy.

In **Lille**, for example, the current mayor, former First Secretary of the French Socialist Party and former Labor Minister Martine Aubry personally prepared the program of a march that ended at the Kharkiv Bridge, named after Lille's Ukrainian sister city. A photo exhibit offered Ukraini-



S&P

Three demonstrations in recent weeks have brought into the streets of Paris between 1 and 2 million, rejecting President Macron's pension reform proposal and expressing themselves on the issues of war and peace.

an artists' depictions of warfare. On Saturday evening, the film documentary *Mariupol. Unlost Hope*, directed by Maksim Litvinov, was projected.

In **Lyon**, the entire week is dedicated to similar mass brainwashing, and in Marseille the demo started in front of the Russian Embassy, calling for the withdrawal of the Russian army from all of Ukraine.

Against All Wars

In **Paris**, at the same time, some 200 people gathered close to the famous Beaubourg Cultural Center for a demonstration of the French *Mouvement de la Paix*, calling for the end of all wars, everywhere, and the end of sanctions and weapon shipments to Ukraine. The *Mouvement de la Paix* organized some 50 gatherings, rallies and demonstrations in close to fifty towns all over the country.

The Paris demonstration criticized the attacks on Pope Francis for his offering the Vatican as a venue for peace negotiations. The newly-released Chinese proposal for peace—see elsewhere in this



S&P

In a bit of street theater at the Paris rally, a member of the Solidarité & Progrès party depicts U.S. President Joe Biden as Dr. Strangelove, riding a Nord Stream pipeline "atomic bomb" into Armageddon as he insists, "And above all, don't talk about Seymour Hersh."



S&P

Jacques Cheminade (r.) and Karel Vereycken, President and Vice President, respectively, of the Solidarité & Progrès party, on the scene during the Paris anti-war demonstration, Feb. 25.

issue—was warmly welcomed as a good addition to the international Peace Club that President Lula da Silva of Brazil is [proposing](#). The arrogant West has now “to listen” to the rest of the world, it was underlined, if we don’t want to end up in a nuclear war.

Over one quarter of those attending were older members of the French Communist Party (PCF), while most of the rest were from various dissident movements and a handful of CGT workers, very angry about the fact that the leadership of their movement was officially participating at the march in favor of supplying more weapons to Ukraine. Notably good speeches came from the *Association Republicaine des Anciens Combattants* (ARAC), a French veterans’ group, and the Mayors for Peace.

Jacques Cheminade and activists of his political party *Solidarité & Progrès* were on site attending the rally and distributed Helga Zepp-LaRouche’s discussion proposal, [Ten Principles](#) of a New International Security and Development Architecture, and S&P’s new hard-hitting petition calling on France to apply an “empty chair” policy to NATO and prepare its disbandment. Especially popular was S&P’s street theater performance with U.S. President Joe Biden as Dr. Strange-love riding a nuclear missile labeled “Nord Stream.” S&P activists also intervened in local gatherings and demonstrations in Libourne (near Bordeaux), Nantes

and Toulouse.

In **Marseille**, according to the regional daily *La Provence*, the “real” peace rally drew about 300 people demanding “with one voice an immediate ceasefire in Ukraine, the dismantling of NATO, and peace between all peoples. As they walked up *La Canebière*, the main thoroughfare, they chanted, “Money for pensions, not for war!” and, “War kills! War pollutes!”

In **Nîmes**, in southern France, over 200 people demonstrated in front of the Roman theater in “solidarity” with Ukraine and demanding “the total withdrawal of the Russian army,” reported Janie Arnéguy, on behalf of the five parties that initiated the rally. Half an hour before, two associations for peace had spoken on the Esplanade. “We are here to say never again and to pay homage to the victims of war,” hammered Eric Bres, Secretary of the Nîmes committee of the Peace Movement. “Those who like war must organize themselves as well as those who make war. Sending weapons cannot change the outcome of the conflict. The solution must be diplomatic,” added Pierre Clec’h, a regional leader of ARAC, before joining the gathering in front of the arena.



S&P

Solidarité & Progrès activists intervened in the peace rally in Nantes, France with hand-made posters, Feb. 25.

United Kingdom: No2NATO

In **London**, the Stop the War and Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) event mobilized about 4,000 demonstrators who marched from the BBC headquarters at Portland Place to a rally in Trafalgar Square declaring: “No to the Russian invasion, no to NATO and no to nuclear war.” There was a mobilization by the No2NATO—No2War group. A counter group demanding more arms for Ukraine, including “human rights campaigner” Peter Tatchell, created a skirmish at the start of the march, and briefly tried to shout over the Trafalgar Square speakers.

Former Stop the War chair Andrew Murray told the crowd that they represented the views of the vast majority of countries worldwide. “China wants peace. India wants peace. South Africa wants peace. Lula in Brazil wants peace,” he said. There were many other speakers, including Stop the War President and musician Brian Eno. Transport union RMT speaker Carlos Barros said members of his union were facing “the biggest attack in generations. We’re facing that attack because we’ve been told there’s no money.”

Eno hit hard on the elites and the economy:

In other news, everyone saw [Prime Minister] Rishi Sunak last week in his massive helmet with his shiny new fighter jet. Well shiny new fighter jets won’t fund the NHS [National Health Service] that is currently crumbling, or pay the teachers and doctors and posties [mailmen] and nurses the wages they demand which we all know they deserve.

Belgium: EU Institutions Confronted

In **Brussels**, on Friday Feb. 24, according to the police, some 2,500 people demonstrated in “Solidarity with Ukraine and in favor of EU-NATO policies.” That figure is far below the 8,000 that showed up last year for a similar show of force.

However, on Sunday, 3,000 people turned out, according to rally organizers (1,600 according to the

police) and demonstrated in front of buildings of the EU Commission and EU Parliament in Brussels, calling for intense diplomatic negotiations. Since many organizations just send delegates instead of mobilizing their entire memberships, the force of the demonstration far exceeds the apparent numbers of people on site. The initiative came from the platform, Europe for Peace and Solidarity, which states:

The war must end to prevent further bloodshed. The continued escalation of the logic of war, including from Belgium and European countries,



Petya Obolenska

Around 3,000 people demonstrated in front of the EU Commission building and the EU Parliament in Brussels, calling for intense diplomatic negotiations to end the war in Ukraine.

has increasingly disastrous and potentially apocalyptic consequences. It threatens to increase the risk of using nuclear weapons.

The Community of Sant’Egidio, close to the Vatican, was very involved in this demonstration. “We are stuck in a logic of war,” Sant’Egidio spokesman Jan Devolder explained to the Belgian TV channel VRT NWS:

Whoever talks about peace is suspected as if that would be pro-Russian, but that is not the intention at all. We are pro-Ukrainian; we are on the side of the people. But we just think that it is in the interest of everyone—including Ukraine, but in the interest of all of Europe and the whole world—that this madness stop.