

German population told to stockpile food in case of war

By Sven Heymanns
24 August 2016

On Sunday, the first details on the German government's new civil defence plan were released. The plan was discussed on Wednesday in the Federal Cabinet and will be presented to the public by Interior Minister Thomas de Maizière. The paper underscores in a shocking manner how the issue of war, 75 years after the catastrophe of World War II, has returned to daily life.

The paper makes clear that the possibility of war on German soil is no longer ruled out. According to the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* (FAS), which received an advance copy of the 69-page documented titled "Concept for Civil Defence," the plan states that currently "an attack on German territory requiring a conventional national defence was unlikely." However, it was important "to adequately prepare for such a life-threatening development which cannot be totally excluded in the future."

In governing circles, preparations are being made for the worst-case scenario. What follows suggests a total-war scenario.

A significant component of the civil defence plan is that in the event of war, the population should at least be able to provide for itself temporarily: "The population will be encouraged to keep an individual food supply good for ten days." Additionally, the German people are "encouraged to take appropriate measures for maintaining a five day supply of uncontaminated water in the amount of two litres per person per day for personal use and first aid until the implementation of specific measures by the state."

Spiegel Online reported that the German government recommends having ready "a supply of medication, warm blankets, coal, wood, candles, flashlights, batteries, matches and cash reserves." This would allow the population to survive the first days of a war,

before measures could be taken by the state to provide emergency supplies.

The FAS also noted that the plan highlights the "need for a reliable alarm system." According to *Spiegel Online*, in case of emergency the population should be alerted by an alarm "which in a threatening situation could be transmitted by radio, TV, sirens, loudspeaker systems, text messages, the internet and in the German subway system."

The government also sees it necessary to ensure "sufficient capacity in the health care system," the FAS reported. "Decontamination units should be set up in front of hospitals in the event of nuclear, biological or chemical attacks, so that the injured can be treated outside the hospitals," explained *Spiegel Online*. The national reserve of smallpox vaccines and antibiotics should also be increased as needed.

The authors of the paper in the Federal Ministry of the Interior do not exclude the possibility of bombing attacks on German cities. How else can the demand for the "reinforcement of buildings" be understood? One can assume that Berlin, especially, with its large number of governmental agencies, would be the target of such an attack. Accordingly, "the task of these agencies...would be to make arrangements for the transfer of their responsibilities to secondary protected locations," the FAS reported on the paper's directives.

Special attention is also paid to the maintenance of public infrastructure. *Spiegel Online* wrote that one third of the Federal Agency for Technical Relief's forces should be placed on standby when necessary. A "master plan for emergency power" will be proposed, with the Federal Network Agency given authority over shut-offs or to ration services in favour of vital facilities in an emergency." A "full supply" of oil and gas sufficient for more than 90 days and to be stored in

reserves at 140 separate locations is also planned.

According to *FAS* writer Thomas Gutschker, there are still more “delicate questions” that have “not been discussed for a long time.” The Federal Labour Office could, in time of need, conscript men and women to work in “areas vital to the nation’s defence.” This is an issue given considerable thought by the authors of the new plan. “The fast and secure delivery of mail of particular importance to the Bundeswehr (for example, draft notices and other communications relating to the resumption of compulsory military service) will be guaranteed under the post and telecommunications security act,” the paper states.

Gutschker comments: “The sentence sounds succinct, but it is politically explosive: Are there once again scenarios conceivable in which conscription must be resumed?”

While the plans are shocking to many people, they are being downplayed by politicians and the media. *Zeit Online* wrote: “Are you startled by the report? You have to hoard water and food for the first time? No need to panic. The end is not here. It is not even near. The whole thing is more of a friendly reminder.”

Above all, the opposition parties are eager to minimise the explosive nature of the paper. Konstantin von Notz, deputy leader of the Green Party fraction in the German parliament, said updating emergency plans for the first time since 1995 was sensible. He saw, however, “no attack scenario for which the population should stockpile supplies.”

Dietmar Bartsch, fraction leader of the Left Party, told the *Kölner Stadtanzeiger*, the government “must not spread new anxieties everyday...one can work people into a panic with continuous proposals, making things completely uncertain.”

In reality, there is nothing about this that is “uncertain.” This is about once again preparing the German population for war.

The document is part of the return of German militarism, which is supported by all parties in parliament. It serves to escalate the wars in the Middle East and the preparations for war with Russia, and to establish the extensive militarisation of society. It includes the entire population in its war policy as well as integrating civilian agencies in support of the Bundeswehr.

According to *FAS*, the paper was prepared over the

course of several years. It was commissioned in 2012 by the budgetary committee of parliament and was developed within the last year parallel to the drafting of the 2016 White Paper, the new foreign policy doctrine of Berlin’s ruling elite that guides Germany’s return to aggressive foreign and military policies.

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