

Strong indications of right-wing extremist involvement in murder of German regional politician

By Peter Schwarz
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Strong indications suggest that right-wing extremists were involved in the murder of district president Walter Lübcke, a regional German politician in the city of Kassel, Hesse.

The 65-year-old Christian Democratic Union (CDU) politician was found dead on the terrace of his home in Wolfhagen-Istha shortly after midnight on June 2. According to the police, he died as a result of a gunshot to the head fired at close range from a handgun. The public prosecutor and police have excluded the possibility of suicide.

A 20-person special commission from the Hesse state criminal police (LKA) was subsequently appointed to investigate “in all directions.” The police and public prosecutor are yet to mention any information about the perpetrators, motives, or the background to the attack. However, it is known that Lübcke had long been the target of right-wing extremist and xenophobic agitation.

Lübcke, born in 1953, was appointed to the position of district president by Hesse Minister President Volker Bouffier in 2009, following a lengthy career in Hesse municipal and state politics. As a top official and head of the state’s regional authorities, Lübcke was also responsible for accommodating refugees in the administrative district of Kassel.

At the height of the refugee crisis in October 2015, this brought him into conflict with right-wing extremists. When he was confronted at a public meeting on Hesse’s reception centre in Lohfelden with angry interjections, some of which came from individuals associated with the far-right Pegida movement, he responded that living together in Germany was based on Christian values, such as

helping those who are in need. “Anyone who doesn’t share these values is free to leave this country at any time if they don’t agree,” he added. “That is the freedom for every German.”

A hate campaign was then unleashed against Lübcke in right-wing extremist circles. He was at times placed under police protection after receiving death threats.

The blog PI-News (Politically Incorrect), which specialises in Islamophobic and xenophobic provocations, published a video of Lübcke’s remarks at the meeting and denounced him as a “traitor to the people” for his “outrageous statement.” In the blog’s comments section, Lübcke’s full private address was published, along with explicit threats against him. One commenter wrote, “The clown from Kassel won’t be performing much longer.”

The right-wing extremist writer Akif Piringçi also agitated against Lübcke at a Pegida rally in Dresden. The “power” in Germany seems to have “so completely abandoned the fear and respect towards the German people that it can tell them with a shrug of the shoulders to leave the country if they aren’t up to it,” he said, before adding with disappointment, “Unfortunately, the concentration camps are currently out of order.” He was later convicted of sedition for this speech.

According to Lübcke’s deputy, Hermann-Josef Klüber, so-called “Reich citizens,” who refuse to acknowledge the authorities of the Federal Republic and instead claim that the German Reich remains in existence, repeatedly threatened Lübcke.

After Lübcke’s death was made public, right-wing extremists celebrated the crime online. “Franz Brandwein” wrote on YouTube, “The dirty pig was put

out of his misery! RESPECT!” “Icemand DJ” added, “One despicable rat fewer. The others are still left.” And a comment posted on Facebook read, “His own fault, no sympathy, that’s what will happen to merkel and the rest.”

An Alternative for Germany politician also made some cynical remarks. On the official Facebook page of the AfD Dithmarschen (Schleswig-Holstein), district party leader Mario Reschke published a comment over a picture of the victim that read, “Murder??? ? He didn’t want to jump with a parachute...” This was a cynical reference to the Free Democratic Party politician Jürgen Möllemann, who fell to his death with an unopened parachute in an alleged suicide exactly 16 years prior to the day of Lübcke’s death.

The indications that Lübcke was the victim of right-wing extremist violence are overwhelming, even though evidence has yet to be presented. However, it is highly questionable whether the public prosecutor and state criminal police are prepared to get to the bottom of the case. Hesse has a long record of covering up right-wing extremist crimes.

For example, the role of the Hesse state intelligence agency in the shooting death of Halit Yosgat, who was the ninth victim of the right-wing terrorist group National Socialist Underground when he was shot in Kassel, remains unclear to this day. It is known that Andreas Temme, an official and leading informant for the intelligence agency, was present in the internet cafe where the murder occurred. For some time afterwards, Temme was protected by the Interior Ministry and banned from making public statements. He continues to insist that he did not see the victim’s body when he left the cafe, even though new evidence confirms that this could not have been true.

Although Temme later lost his post with the intelligence agency, he continued to work for the state of Hesse at the office of the district of Kassel, the authority led by Lübcke since 2009.

The role of the police in the threatening messages sent to Seda Ba?ay-Y?ld?z also remains unclear. The Frankfurter defence lawyer, who also represented families of NSU victims, received several letters containing death threats directed at her and her 2-year-old daughter, which were signed in the name of “NSU 2.0.” Although it was revealed that her address was obtained without authorisation from a police

computer in Frankfurt, and several right-wing extremist police officers were removed from duty, the source of the letters remains unclear.

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