



Standing ovation for a Nazi in Canada, Nord Stream Update & the Hypocrisy of the Green Party

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Zain Raza ist (ZR): Thank you for tuning in today and welcome back to another episode of The Source. I'm your host, Zain Raza and today I'll be talking to independent journalist and author Fabian Scheidler. Fabian has written several books, one of them being the End of the Megamachine: A Brief History of a Failing Civilization. Fabian, welcome back.

Fabian Scheidler (FS): It's a pleasure to be back.

ZR: Let us begin this interview with the Nord Stream pipeline. The 26th of September marked the one year anniversary of the bombing of the Nord Stream pipeline. The majority of the German media mostly covered a theory surfaced by established media outlets and rarely addressed the piece of Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Seymour Hersh who in February of this year claimed the US was responsible for bombing the Nord Stream pipeline. The prevailing theory in the mainstream media up until today came a few weeks after Sy Hersh released his article. It appeared in The New York Times, which relied entirely on anonymous US intelligence sources that claim a rogue Ukrainian group conducted the bombing using the Andromeda yacht. This also prompted the German media to investigate and with some deviances, came to the same conclusion. Moving forward to June of this year, The Washington Post reported that attacks were conducted by the knowledge and order of the Ukrainian military and that US and European intelligence had known about the details of this plan. One year later, how do you dissect all this contradicting information, and which theory do you hold for most plausible?

FS: Well, first of all, we have to consider the fact that investigative journalism in all Western mainstream media has really failed on this issue. You should look at a case like that major act of environmental and political terrorism and sabotage one of the most important cases in recent history. Like in any other criminal case. So you should ask who has a motive? You should ask who has the means to do it. You should ask who has maybe even announced to do so. Who cheered after the deed and so on. I mean, if you look at who done it on television, these are the kinds of questions that criminal investigators ask. But if you read the pieces in

The New York Times that you mentioned in March or Die Zeit at the same time, they didn't ask the most simple questions. They didn't even mention Seymour Hersh. Now, Seymour Hersh is one of the most famous and best known investigative journalists in the world. That's not a nobody. And they started to smear him on the grounds of saying that while maybe he was a great journalist 50 years ago when he covered My Lai, the massacres by the US military in Vietnam, which caused major outcry and other major stories for The New York Times and other outlets, but now he's an old man, and maybe he's even a conspiracy theorist. And they resorted to some stories Hersh published later, like on Syria, where they claimed that he was wrong on Syria because Hersh had written an article about the gas attacks in Syria ten years ago. And what he said in this article was basically that the terrorist organizations in Syria, the Islamist terrorist organizations, could have produced the gas themselves with the help of Turkey. He didn't say that Assad couldn't have done it, but some of the media turned the story around to say he claimed that Assad couldn't have been guilty. So these kinds of smear campaigns started to discredit the story by Hersh. Now, Hersh has only one anonymous source, but he has worked like that for half a century. And all of his stories turned out to be true in the end. So he has a good credit. What kind of credit does The New York Times have? I mean, they disinformed us about the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in 2003, contributing to this war with 1 million dead. And so The New York Times doesn't have a great credit in telling us the truth when it comes to foreign policy. Now, that doesn't mean that I say Hersh's story must be true, but I think he has a credit that it should be investigated thoroughly. Has this happened? No, it didn't happen. Is rarely mentioned in the mainstream media. And now also the timing is interesting. The New York Times and Die Zeit came up with that other story about that sailboat and the Ukrainian involvement a couple of weeks after Hersh's article made publicity and headlines around the world. The interview I did with him was published in China, India and Latin America - all over the world. And so they really needed another story. And if you look at the details of what The New York Times and Die Zeit wrote, it's very unlikely that a sailboat like that could have carried out a military operation with at least half a ton of military explosives. You need a decompression chamber to do things like that in 80 m depth. It couldn't have been on the boat. It's too small. There are many other details. Then there are details that no reporter of Die Zeit or Der SPIEGEL or The New York Times or The Washington Post has ever investigated. And that is the fact that they have this trace of explosive on a kitchen table on this yacht, which German prosecutors said they had found in January. And Die Zeit claimed at the time that, well, they probably didn't have the time to clean up the table. Well, now you need two days from Bornholm where the explosions took place to the harbor in Rostock. And no time to clean up the table. I mean, if these alleged six people on this sailboat should have carried out such complex military operations, they should be professional enough to clean up the table. I mean, this is really ridiculous. And what is even more amazing is that our investigative journalists don't even ask these simple questions. That's amazing. So what can we say one year after the deed, after the explosions? The case is still unresolved and there are a number of questions. Remember President Biden in February 2022, before the Russian invasion of Ukraine started, declared in the White House in a press conference with Olaf Scholz standing next to him "we will end

this pipeline if Russia invades Ukraine. And then he was asked again by a reporter, a German reporter, well, how can you do that? It's German and Russian infrastructure. And he smiled and said, you will see, we will be able to do that. Now, Scholz was standing next to him saying nothing. Later on in the press conference, Scholz was asked, well, concerning Nord Stream, what do you think? And Scholz didn't reply directly to the Nord Stream case, but he said, well, we are united in everything we do. We decide everything together. So there are a number of questions. If that was really an announcement that the US will take out the pipeline - which it apparently was, it was very blunt, very obvious - then what did Scholz know at the time? Was he briefed? Hersh says that according to some of his CIA sources, they assume that Scholz knew what they were going to do. Now, this is a serious case about the German chancellor, because if he knew that they would blow up the pipeline, he should have acted to protect the German citizens. I mean, a German chancellor has an oath to keep the German people safe. So he would have acted against his oath if he would have allowed German infrastructure to be destroyed. So there are a lot of questions, a lot of open questions. And I think we should continue to investigate this story. We should continue to investigate all kinds of theories. Also, the sailboat, we should also follow up the sailboat story, because if it was cover up operations, which many journalists think it was like, for example, Jeremy Scahill, the co-founder of The Intercept, he ran a piece a couple of months ago, in which he said that normally when you plan a covert operation and blow up things, you also have some kind of red herring, some kind of fake story around it to distract people from the real story. So we don't know if that was the case, but it's possible and we should investigate this. Unfortunately, our media have failed so far to do so.

ZR: I would like to sidetrack a bit and get your assessment on a recent incident that took place on the 22nd of September in Canada. Ukrainian President Zelensky visited Canada seeking to bolster support for Ukraine's war against Russia. Following his speech in the House of Commons, 98 year old Yaroslav Hunka was introduced as a war hero and Canadian politicians, including the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, as well as Zelensky gave a standing ovation to him. It turned out, however, that Yaroslav Hunka, was actually part of the SS14 Waffen-Division, a voluntary unit that was under the command of the Nazis. Canadian Speaker of the House Anthony Rota stepped down following the incident, and Justin Trudeau has already apologized for the outrage that followed. How do you evaluate this incident and why do you think the West is so complicit when it comes to issues surrounding Nazi-ism in relation to Ukraine?

FS: Well, everyone who watches your show should also watch the scenes in the Canadian parliament. It's really incredible. I mean, the speaker of the House introduced a person standing in the gallery, this 98 year old man. And they all raised and applauded this person. Now, the best case scenario that you can imagine is that they didn't have the faintest idea who that man was. Now, if you are a parliamentarian or prime minister, should you applaud people that you don't know at all? Why should you? Now, the speaker of the House mentioned the fact that this person in the gallery was fighting against the Russians in World

War Two. Now, the Russians - the USSR at the time - was an ally of Canada. So he was fighting against the allied forces, apparently on the side of the Germans. Everyone in the parliament should have known that. I mean, do these people not know on which side Canada was fighting in the Second World War and on which side the USSR was fighting in the Second World War? I mean, remember, the Russians had the most heavy losses in World War Two. They lost about 20 million people. And without them, the Nazis couldn't have been defeated. And now they are applauding a man who was fighting against the USSR on the German side. I mean, that's devastating for the parliament. And everyone was raising to applaud this man. So even if they didn't know that he was from the Waffen-SS, this is a complete - it's not only an embarrassment, it's really I mean, you cannot take this parliament seriously anymore. If they don't know their history, they shouldn't be there to represent the people. Every person that you would recruit by chance would have more knowledge about Canadian history than these people. So it's a question about our democracies. Who is representing the Canadian people? Now, if you go further, you will see that it's not really plausible that no one knows who this person is. For example, there was the highest general of the Canadian forces in the audience. He was applauding as well. And he hasn't apologized, by the way. He was asked by the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, one of the most renowned institutions in the world, to apologize. Others have also asked to apologize. He didn't apologize for applauding this Nazi. Now we have to know that the Canadian military has trained extreme right wing or even Nazi battalions, military forces in Ukraine after the Maidan coup in 2014. And many voices, including already the Simon Wiesenthal Center, said you shouldn't train Nazi battalions like the Azov battalion. But the Canadian military continued to fund and to train these people. So there is a connection. It's quite impossible that this general, I think his name was Wayne Eyre, the chief of the defense staff of Canada, didn't know anything about this story. And so now, of course, after the incident, they tried to cover it up. And what is really remarkable is the way that Justin Trudeau, in his first remarks after the incident, tried to blame Russia for all of this. He said, well, it's an embarrassment for the Canadian people. He didn't say it's an embarrassment for me. He said it's embarrassing - the Canadian people didn't have anything to do with it. It was the parliament and him and his general and Zelensky and all the rest of them. And he then continued to say, well, we have to be aware of Russian disinformation. I mean, you can blame Russia for all sorts of things, certainly for invading Ukraine but they didn't have anything to do with this incident that was purely a Canadian incident. And that's the way they now try to frame the story in many media, unfortunately. They say, well, now Russia tries to profit from this story with its disinformation campaign. No, they didn't have anything to do with it. And there was another remarkable thing. The magazine Politico ran an article after all of this scandal, which really went viral across the world, saying that, well, look, not every SS unit is the same. Waffen-SS shouldn't be regarded as the worst of them, they were not all participating in genocide and so on. He started to trivialize Nazi-ism in Politico, which is incredible. Just the fact that he was in the Waffen-SS doesn't necessarily mean that he is a Nazi. So why are we going to trivialize the Nazis now in this kind of blind subordination to an American neocon narrative that we should go along with all kinds of forces to counter the

Russians in Ukraine? And this is not a single case, the support or even the cheering of Nazis. Let's go back to 2014, the Maidan uprising and what some call, I think rightfully Coup d'État, because an elected government was overthrown. In those days, a new government was installed, which was the favored government that the US wanted. We have this leak of Victoria "Fuck the EU" Nuland leaked telephone call with the American ambassador in Ukraine, and they were talking about which kind of government they would like to have after the coup, and they wanted to have Yatsenyuk, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, and he really became the prime minister. And in his first government, there was also a party involved in the coalition government called the Svoboda Party, which is a full fledged neo-Nazi party. And three or four of the ministers in this first government were Nazis. They were part of the Swoboda Party. Now, all Western governments have collaborated with them. The German president went to Ukraine and took photos with all these ministers and so on. So there was very little critical reporting on the fact that the new government of Ukraine has a coalition with the Nazi party. And this is not to say I mean, there is certainly a Nazi problem in Ukraine - at the time in 2014 and today. That is not to say that the invasion of Ukraine was justified, as Putin claimed "we have to clean up this Nazi mess in Ukraine." That's not a justification to invade the country, but there's certainly a Nazi problem and there's certainly a problem with the West turning at least a blind eye to those Nazi forces or even collaborating with them.

ZR: I want to shift gears here and talk about politics in Germany. The Greens promised a values led foreign policy. It would be, quote, "feminist and human rights based", unquote. When it came to Assange, Germany, the now Foreign minister, Annalena Baerbock of the Greens during the elections even demanded the immediate release of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and spoke of serious violations of the European Convention on Human Rights. Now we see that Germany does not even attempt to act as a peace broker in Ukraine and completely excludes negotiations and diplomacy as an option. When it comes to the climate, Germany imports liquefied natural gas from the US and opened a number of terminals in northern Germany, despite the opposition of the tourism industry or conservationists and environmental groups. When it comes to Assange, Baerbock has not made it a priority and applied no substantial pressure as of yet. How do you assess this change in the Green Party and what reasons do you think are driving this?

FS: I mean, this is maybe the most hypocritical government that we ever had, and we had a lot of hypocrite governments in Germany. And the Green Party especially. The first thing to say is that the job description of the Minister of Foreign Affairs is to be the chief diplomat. Now, if you refuse diplomacy, you refuse to do your job. It's her job to engage in diplomacy. Now they claim that they have a value based foreign policy. Which of our values do they mean? Which values do they stand for when it comes to Ukraine? I mean, the first human right is the right to live. And it's also enshrined in the German constitution, for example. Now we see that this is a war of attrition. It's a stalemate. It's a new Verdun, even. If we go on like that. And that means that tens, even hundreds of thousands of people could be sacrificed for a senseless war to shift the border some kilometers to the east or the west. Now, is it value

based to say that we will go on with that war forever, no matter how many people die, no matter how Ukraine will be devastated. The German sociologist Max Weber, in the late 19th century, made a distinction between ethics based on just claiming values and ethics based on the results that you want to see. If you just claim, well, we have these values no matter how many people die. I think it's not really a very sound ethic. Sound ethics is when you do things in the real world, whether you like the real world as it is or not. Which results in saving, for example, human lives, in saving human sufferings. Does our foreign minister do that job? No, she doesn't. She just does what the Neocons in Washington, D.C. tell her to do and to say. And she is not representing the German people. I mean, there are lots of polls which say that Germans are not in favor of ever more weapons. Majority is in favor of negotiations and so on. So she's not acting on behalf of the German population and she's also not acting on behalf of the German economy, for example, which is the only economy in all OECD countries which is shrinking. And you could talk about the ecological limits to growth, and I've written a lot about it. I think we shouldn't go on with economic growth forever. But the way they organize the shrinking of the German economy is neither in the interests of the German people nor in the interest of the climate or ecology, because as you pointed out, while they are claiming to be champions of human rights and of ecology, they not only build these new LNG liquefied gas terminals to import US fracking gas, which is the most dirty gas that you can imagine. Much dirtier than the Russian gas. Because with fracking, there are a lot of leaks and you don't have only the emissions from burning the methane, but also the leaks. And methane is a gas much more powerful climate changer than CO₂. So it's the most dirty energy source that you can imagine. And they are importing that, they are even building more LNG terminals than necessary. And that's proven by a lot of studies. Now they are building it in natural reserves and so on. So they are anti-eco. They are anti-climate in the way they handle the situation. And by the way, they have accepted that the German government is going to build 1000 kilometers of new highways. New Autobahn in Germany, which is completely crazy at a time when the public transport is in a very bad state. The German rail system is almost collapsing. I experience that every week because I travel a lot with the German rails. It's in a devastating state. Instead, they are building roads. So it's a hypocritical government. And now you ask, how is that possible? Because if you read the program of the Greens when they were founded more than 40 years ago, it was a really anti-capitalist party. It was a peace party. Peace was one of the courses of that party. They were in favor of demilitarizing society to break up all the military contractors and things like that. And they have turned into being quite the opposite of what they were more than four years ago. And I think one way that was achieved was that they were co-opted, for example, by some of the American think tanks, transatlantic think tanks like the German Marshall Fund and many others. And many - practically all the Green Party leadership in Germany belongs to one or another of these think tanks. And that way you call up these people who affiliate them with US interests, the way of the US personnel and so on. And I think that they are so deeply embedded into these transatlantic networks that they don't even see what they are doing and that they are not acting in the interests of either Germany or an ecological transition or whatever, and certainly not in the name of peace.

ZR: Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine last year, the European Union has strongly condemned Russia's actions, imposed sanctions and pledged its full support behind Ukraine militarily and financially. However, Austria is one of the few EU members that is not part of NATO and has also remained neutral. According to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, the Austrian government has provided Ukraine with €570 million in humanitarian aid. However, since fatalities are anchored in the Austrian constitution, it cannot provide military assistance and only humanitarian aid. You recently wrote an article on *Le Monde* titled *Vienna Balancing Act: Austria's Neutrality in the Ukraine War*. Can you tell us the main points that you wanted to convey in that article?

FS: Yes, there is an ongoing discussion in Austria about neutrality since the Ukraine war started or the Russian invasion, rather, started. Now, most of the people who question neutrality do not say that Austria should join NATO. It's only a very tiny minority. Also in the Austrian parliament, only one, the smallest party, a neo-liberal small party, is all in favor of abandoning neutrality. But it's a discussion: what does neutrality mean? Can we train Ukrainian civil people, or can we help to get rid of mines inside Ukraine? So these kinds of debates. And I took this situation to have a look at what neutrality means in Austrian history. And it's very interesting because after the war, Austria took a different path than Germany because they negotiated with the Soviet Union under Stalin in those days not to be separated, to get independence as an unseparated, undivided state under the condition that they become neutral. And the Soviet Union and the Western allies all agreed that Ukraine has a neutral status. And so Germany was divided. There were also in Germany there were negotiations or there was a proposal by Stalin that if Germany becomes neutral, no division, no separation of the country, but Konrad Adenauer and the Western allies refused that. Now, the interesting thing then is that the way they handled neutrality, I mean, you can use neutrality just to lean back and watch things go without engaging in international politics. But starting in the sixties and seventies with the later chancellor, Bruno Kreisky, who was a close friend to the German chancellor, Willy Brandt. They were both in exile. They worked against the Nazis from exile together. And he developed a kind of active, engaged neutrality which played quite a crucial role in many processes. For example, in the making of the organization for Security and Cooperation, the OSCE, which were the conferences on cooperation. And which became pivotal for a dialog with the Eastern Bloc. He was also very important, Bruno Kreisky and the Austrian government, in building bridges between Israel and Palestine. Kreisky was the first person to invite Yasser Arafat in those days, the leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the PLO, to the Socialist International. So he's helped to build bridges which finally ended in the Oslo process and many others. I mean, the whole thing went bust later. But it was important. And they also had important contacts to the Global South in those days. Many countries in the global South, especially from the non aligned movement, were searching for a new economic international order. As it was called in those days. And these are lessons that if you are a neutral state, you neither belong to NATO, nor to the Eastern bloc. You have a sort of room of maneuver to work with others to make sure that economic

development and peace can be brought about without engaging in this block confrontation. Now we have a new block confrontation. Many countries are joining NATO. Finland has already. Sweden will probably do so. With Ireland, we don't know. I don't think it's probable that they will, but there's a discussion going on. And I think it's important that Austria remains neutral and that it uses its neutrality. It doesn't have a very progressive government right now, but I think we now see a new bloc confrontation which is extremely dangerous. It's not only about Ukraine and Russia, but it's about China at the end of the day. And if we go down that way into a new Cold War or even hot war with China, we will completely finish this planet. I mean, we have this ecological and climate crisis. We have the threat of nuclear war, which is very serious. And so I think we need this kind of détente. And the countries in the global South, Zain, are calling for exactly that. Countries from Africa, countries from Latin America, even India with its extreme right wing government. But they are calling for a new kind of world order, which is neither dominated by the US, the hegemon, nor resulting in a new Bloc confrontation, but into a multipolar order. And the BRICS summit, the last BRICS summit was very important in that. There are a number of new countries in the BRICS formation. Now Saudi Arabia, Iran, which people wouldn't have considered possible, that they are part of the same kind of organization. They didn't even have diplomatic relations until recently. And China brought about a deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which was very important. It was not the US, it was not the EU. And so we see that the world is changing dramatically but the Western governments don't want to notice that. They want to stay in control. And this narrative that we have one evil enemy that we have to fight until the end serves this idea of Western hegemony. But the world has become different. The economic realities are different. The G7 are not representing the majority of the planet, it's just a tiny part of the population of the planet. Nor are they representing the largest part of the economy. And so things are changing. And I do hope that we won't engage in this new block confrontation and neutrality could be a part of that story.

ZR: Fabian Scheidler, independent journalist and author, thank you for your insights and time.

FS: Thank you, Zain.

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