



German domestic spy agency labels AfD youth organization as 'extreme right,' mass surveillance of all members now permitted

Description

GERMANY: Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), which serves as the country's domestic intelligence service, has classified the AfD party youth wing, Junge Alternative (JA), as a "certain right-wing extremist endeavor." The new designation not only creates the conditions for increased monitoring and enforcement action against JA, it also comes as a political hit to the parent AfD party at a time when it has seen a surge in popularity.

The BfV had already listed the AfD youth group as a "suspected case" in 2019, and the agency is now allowed to use all intelligence tools to monitor the JA after its new designation. In addition to the use of so-called confidential informants, this will include telephone tapping and covert observation, according to German newspaper Die Welt.

The BfV justified its step, among other things, with the concept of how the organization allegedly views the German people. The BfV argues that JA's view is not compatible with the country's constitution, also known as the Basic Law.

It is unclear what specific comments the BfV is referring to, but it has long been reported, including in mainstream media outlets, that foreigners, particularly from Middle Eastern and African countries, feature extremely high crime rates, especially for serious crimes like murder, assault, robbery, and rape. Furthermore, German officials themselves have pointed to foreigners from these countries as being responsible for the dramatic increase in child marriage and female genital mutilation. In other areas, like anti-Semitism, the predominant groups involved all hail from the Middle East.

The BfV also claims that the AfD has repeatedly expressed itself in an anti-democratic manner. The agency claims members of the JA denigrate "political opponents, but also the state and its representatives per se." This allegedly indicates that the Young Alternative is not concerned with democratic discourse, "but with a general disparagement of the democratic system of the Federal Republic of Germany."

According to the government's own data, the AfD is the most attacked party in Germany. Its members

have been subject to numerous arson attacks, and much of the political establishment — both the left and the center-right — have called for the party's complete ban. The party has also been effectively banned from the country's political talk shows on the ARD and ZDF channels, which are required to air a plurality of views reflecting the German public, due to their status as publically funded.

The federal executive committee of the Junge Alternative downplayed the BfV's announcement.

"The classification of the so-called constitutional protection does not surprise us," the board of the party youth branch announced.

The statement outlined that the country's secret services are simply fulfilling their mission of suppressing the country's opposition.

"Regardless of whether they are critics of migration, critics of coronavirus measures or advocates of peace — every form of authentic opposition in this country is systematically stigmatized by this authority," the board of the JA warned. Now, the JA is reviewing its legal options in light of the designation.

AfD leaders Tino Chrupalla and Alice Weidel also released a joint statement, writing: "We currently have neither a justification nor relevant documents that make the step comprehensible."

The AfD is facing various legal disputes that could end up with the party being slapped by the BfV with a similar "right-wing extremist" designation. The party suspects that the BfV made the move against the JA to strengthen its case against the AfD. If the AfD receives such a designation, it could pave the way for a complete ban of the party in Germany.

There is also the suspicion that the BfV is using the new classification of the JA to influence legal disputes with the AfD.

In January, the AfD appealed to the Higher Administrative Court in Münster to overturn the BfV's classification of the party, its youth organization and the dissolved party branch "Der Flügel" as suspected right-wing extremists.

Federal Interior Minister Nancy Faeser (SPD), known for writing for Antifa Magazine and her claims that the right poses the biggest threat to Germany, praised BfV for classifying the party as a right-wing extremist group.

"We are a strong and resilient democracy. We are very resolute in defending ourselves against racism and other forms of inhumanity," she said on Wednesday. "We are doing everything we can to dry up the breeding ground for right-wing extremist violence."

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