

Germany's far-right is pushing election fraud disinformation | Coda Story

By Emily Schultheis

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On September 11, Björn Höcke, an influential state-level leader for the far-right party Alternative für Deutschland, took the stage at a campaign event in the small city of Burgstädt in Saxony. He began his speech with the kind of universal appeal politicians often make in the final weeks before a big election, encouraging supporters to go out and vote.

But Höcke — head of a radical faction within the AfD known simply as “the Wing” and a man who once described Berlin’s Holocaust Memorial as a “monument to shame” — did not stop there. Not only should the faithful cast their ballots for the party, he said, they should make sure to do it in person and not by mail, which, he alleged, is vulnerable to fraud and manipulation. “Anyone who has an interest in fair elections and secret elections should go to their polling place,” he explained.

Germany heads to the polls on Sunday, September 26, in an unusually open and unpredictable general election that could determine the country’s direction for decades to follow. For the first time in 16 years, Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has helmed the country since 2005, is not standing again.

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