

Merkel, Laschet and Söder under pressure

German conservatives' tide of misdemeanours



Parliamentarian	Position	Allegation	Action
Axel Fischer	Member of Bundestag, CDU	Allegedly received money from Azerbaijan in exchange for voting for pro-Azerbaijani motions and resolutions. Fischer rejected the allegations as false.	Parliamentary immunity lifted, Mar 2021. Investigation continuing at Munich state attorney office.
Mark Hauptmann	Ex-Member of Bundestag, CDU	Alleged irregular lobbying assistance for Azerbaijan.	Resigned from Bundestag Mar 2021.
Hans-Jürgen Irmer	Member of Bundestag, CDU	Alleged use of influence to procure mask order for Hesse firm for Berlin health ministry. Possible compensation from placing of advertisement in a newspaper run by Irmer.	Denies wrongdoing.
Armin Laschet	North Rhine-Westphalia prime minister, CDU chairman, Member of NRW parliament	Laschet's son Johannes allegedly helped organise uncontested (non-tendered) Nov 2020 procurement from Van Laack textile firm (for which he worked as a model) of 1.25m masks with NRW logo for NRW police force.	Order cancelled Dec 2020 because of doubts procedures. New tender organised. Van Laack takes part in tender, in Mar 2021 announces action for damages if order not confirmed.
Nikolas Löbel	Ex-Member of Bundestag, CDU	Admits receiving €250,000 commission for procuring Chinese masks for Baden-Württemberg firm in April 2020, using parliamentary connections	Resigned from Bundestag Mar 2021, with immediate effect, will leave politics.
Georg Nüßlein	Member of Bundestag, CSU, ex-deputy chair, CDU/CSU parliamentary grouping	Alleged non-tax payment on receipt of €660,000 commission via a Liechtenstein bank account from offshore Caribbean firm for procuring protective masks for Bavarian government and Berlin health ministry.	Denies wrongdoing. Munich state attorney conducting formal investigations. Resigned from CDU/CSU grouping Mar 2021.
Alfred Sauter	Member of Bavarian parliament, ex Bavarian justice minister, CSU	Alleged receipt of €1.2m as commission from mask contract with Bavarian government and other authorities.	Resigned from local party chairmanship in Günzburg, resigned from Bavarian CSU parliamentary grouping. Denies allegations as 'adverturous'
Jens Spahn	Health minister, Member of Bundestag, CDU. Armin Laschet running-mate for Jan 2021 CDU chairmanship election	Met dozen party donors in Leipzig for private fund-raising dinner, 20 Oct 2020, defying pandemic rules on household gatherings. Spahn tested Covid-positive 21 Oct. Spahn and husband Daniel Funke purchased €4m villa in summer 2020 in prosperous Berlin suburb of Dahlen, allegedly with loan from Westmünsterland savings bank where Spahn was supervisory board member in 2009-15. Media company Burda sold masks worth €570,000 to Berlin health ministry in April 2020. Funke works in Berlin as head of Burda Berlin office. No suspicion of any financial wrongdoing.	TV interview 20 Oct 2020 pointing to infection threat from unauthorised gatherings. Spahn parliamentary office confirms 'private dinner', claims rules upheld, declines to give names of attendees/funders. Denies receiving favourable conditions. Takes legal action to prevent journalists from probing details of purchase from official Berlin registration agency. Burda confirms transaction but said it 'didn't earn a cent' since the masks were sold at cost as part of general Covid assistance. Funke was not informed about the deal.
Karin Strenz	Member of Bundestag, CDU	Alleged receipt of payments from Azerbaijan for parliamentary influence	Denies wrongdoing. Investigation by Frankfurt state attorney office since 2020. Died on 21 Mar on return flight from Cuba after a private journey.
Klaus-Peter Willsch	Member of Bundestag, CDU	Celebrated 60th birthday in Feb 2021 with home party, allegedly breaking rules on isolation. No suspicion of any financial wrongdoing.	Admits 'didn't set a good example' but denies breaking any rules.
Thomas Zech	Member of Bundestag, CSU (2013-17), returned 2020.	Carried out public relations and consulting work in 2016 for former Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski, later found guilty of corruption.	Announced resignation from parliament on 18.3.21.