Structures of Bias:
How the State Systematically Downplays Right-Wing Extremism[*]

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Abstract

The rise of right-wing extremism (RWE) is often attributed to citizens' economic and cultural grievances. We know less about how the state facilitates RWE in contemporary democracies, despite commonly voiced claims that state actors help RWE flourish due to their biased treatment of political extremism. How valid is this critique? Analyzing thousands of documents covering the behavior of political parties, intelligence agencies, and the police in Germany over many decades and across states, we demonstrate that state actors have systematically downplayed RWE. This bias is not a feature of the state per se; it only emerges consistently among center-right actors. Partisanship thus biases how even presumptively neutral state actors address the far-right extremist threat, a bias that we find exists even in the absence of strategic electoral considerations. Taken together, our research demonstrates that the very state actors charged with fighting extremism are highly influenced by partisanship and ideology.

Introduction

Right-wing extremism (RWE) has become endemic across many countries. Assaults range from everyday verbal and physical intimidation of ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities to large-scale right-wing terror attacks that aim to kill (Leidig 2020; Miller-Idriss 2020). These crimes are frequently perpetuated by individuals who are not directly connected to state actors or political parties. Yet how state actors approach political extremism is critical for the state's ability to combat this danger, and it also influences how citizens perceive and interact with extremist threats. Given the centrality of the state in repressing or facilitating extremism, there has been mounting criticism that politicians, bureaucrats, and law enforcement do not take RWE seriously (Görder and Chavannes 2020; Schultz 2021). By downplaying its importance and instead drawing attention to left-wing extremism (LWE), the state may even be complicit in extremism's spread. For example, President Trump directed the F.B.I. and the Justice Department to focus their energies on Antifa and radical left-wing groups rather than on white supremacists, even though law enforcement knew the latter to be a more imminent threat (Goldman, Benner and Kanno-Youngs 2021). In Austria, the governing center-right party handed the far-right, nationalist Freedom Party control over the interior ministry, reflecting a growing Europe-wide trend of increased far-right influence over state security forces and intelligence agencies.[1]

These developments take place amid long-standing concerns that the very state actors in charge of defending democratic stability and public safety discount right-wing extremism. This critique has been salient in postwar Germany, where left-wing politicians and activists have long accused intelligence agencies, the police, and the political establishment of deliberately ignoring RWE. The state, they insist, is "blind in the right eye" (*auf dem rechten Auge blind*) (Kleffner and Meisner 2019, 2023; Schultz 2021). These accusations are often tied to seemingly egregious intelligence and policing missteps, such as, for instance, the state's

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[1] Under the Freedom Party, the interior ministry raided Austria's intelligence agency and the homes of staff members, seizing information about far-right extremists (Bennhold 2019).

repeated failures to solve a series of xenophobic murders carried out by the terror group Nationalist Socialist Underground (NSU) in the 2000s, or the 2019 assassination of Walter Lübcke, a high-ranking pro-immigrant politician, by a known neo-Nazi.

Is such criticism justified? Do intelligence agencies, law enforcement, and politicians consistently minimize the significance of right-wing extremism? Or are these accusations made by left-wing parties and activists who want to discredit their opponents? It is possible, for example, that the state's failure to prevent high-profile RWE incidents represents isolated mistakes, rather than being indicative of long-term, systemic bias. As Germany's center-right interior minister Horst Seehofer countered when asked about his agencies' neglect of far-right extremist threats: "We are *not* blind in the right eye."[2]

We assess this claim in this paper. Focusing on Germany, we develop a novel framework and several measures to examine whether the state has systematically downplayed right-wing extremism over the long-term. To do so, we analyze a variety of documents produced by different types of state actors from the postwar years until today.[3] At the level of political parties[4] we investigate speeches, election manifestos, and parliamentary inquiries. At the level of presumptively non-partisan state institutions, we study reports published by intelligence agencies charged with protecting the democratic order (*Verfassungsschutz*) as well as publications by police unions.

Investigating these data sources over the long run using a dictionary approach, hand coding, and a structural topic model (among other methods), we arrive at two key findings. First, even though right-wing extremist crimes have far exceeded left-wing extremist crimes for decades, German political parties have consistently minimized threats emerging from the Far Right. This bias occurs across the political spectrum, but it is especially visible

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[2]"Wir sind nicht auf dem rechten Auge blind." *Die Zeit*, July 2, 2019. Emphasis added.

[3]In the pre-reunification years (1949-1990), we examine West Germany exclusively. In the post-reunification years, our data includes both West and East German states.

[4]Though parties have deeper links with civil society than do law enforcement or intelligence agencies, following Katz and Mair (1995) and Biezen and Kopecký (2014) we view parties as increasingly linked to the state (e.g., via the state's regulation and financing of parties or parties' ability to make appointments in the civil service/public sector).

among center-right parties. Center-left parties are more variable in their approach and at times discount LWE. Second, these biases extend to purportedly neutral state actors. Intelligence agencies under the auspices of a center-right interior minister devote relatively less attention to RWE in their public reports compared to intelligence agencies overseen by center-left interior ministers. We uncover similar ideological biases in how police publications address political extremism. These findings hold when controlling for actual extremist crime rates and electoral incentives to cater to far-right voters, they are robust to only focusing on violent extremist crimes, and they operate within and across states and over time. In short, partisanship and ideology significantly and enduringly predict how German state actors approach threats that are fundamental to public safety and the democratic order. By implication, center-right politicians and the agencies they oversee have not adequately alerted citizens of the far-right threat, thereby potentially contributing to the dramatic rise and entrenchment of right-wing extremism.

Taken together, these findings contribute to several bodies of research. First, we advance scholarship connecting state actors to inter-group violence. Prior research demonstrates that politicians can deliberately stoke hate crime and inter-ethnic riots. Often in collusion with the police, these politicians may trigger such violence for their own divisive agendas (Karapin 2002; Wilkinson 2004, c.f. Haas 2023). We add to this research by showing that politicians and the bureaucrats they appoint can create permissive environments for far-right violence and bolster far-right narratives without ever appealing to the public to commit extremist acts or even expressing sympathies for far-right causes. The documents we analyze broadcast to the public whether the state considers certain political developments as extremist and consequently mold societal norms about what political behaviors are legitimate. Failure to categorically condemn politically motivated violence sends signals that such behaviors are acceptable. Our research thus highlights that seemingly centrist or non-partisan state actors can systematically distort how the public perceives the dangers and legitimacy of political extremism.

Second, our focus on a range of state actors complements research on the global rise of RWE (Golder 2016; Miller-Idriss 2020). Much of this work has emphasized how demand-side factors such as fears over immigration, crime, cultural diversity or economic and status competition promote far-right party success as well as anti-minority hate crime (Alizade 2023; Frey 2020; Grossman and Zonszein 2023; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020; Hooijer 2021; Marbach and Ropers 2018; Riaz, Bischof and Wagner 2023).[5] Without discounting the importance of demand, our study turns the spotlight on the methods established state actors operating within normal democratic processes employ to amplify or downplay the dangers of extremist behaviors (see also Brown, Mondon and Winter 2023; Mudde 2010). We thus join supply-side accounts that link the success of far-right parties[6] and ideas to centrist party positioning or institutional factors (Abou-Chadi and Krause 2020; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; Bartels 2023; Bustikova 2014; Fitzgerald 2018; Meguid 2008; Mondon and Winter 2020), but we expand the time horizon and set of state actors, institutions, and elite behaviors that scholars of RWE typically study.[7] This approach allows us to reveal a deeply entrenched, structural bias in the center-right's treatment of the right-wing extremist threat that withstands the vicissitudes of short-run electoral incentives or the motives of individual politicians.

Third, by illuminating the partisan nature of the state's approach to extremism, we contribute to scholarship that critically assesses how the state defines terrorist threats and how it communicates these threats to the public (e.g., Martini, Ford and Jackson 2020; Stump and Dixit 2013). For example, prior work argues that state actors perceive RWE as less threatening because it upholds racial hierarchies that have long privileged whiteness. Intelligence agencies and other state institutions reflect this hegemonic ideology and power structure (Meier 2020). Our findings are consistent with this argument, but also suggest

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[5]Note that Matsunaga (2023) additionally examines the mediating effect of far-right parties.

[6]Far-right parties encompass extremist parties that oppose democracy and radical parties that seek its transformation, often in an illiberal direction. Nationalism, nativism, populism, and a belief in hierarchy tend to characterize both (Golder 2016).

[7]See also Spirig (2023) who demonstrates that the behavior of another state actor – the judiciary – varies based on the public salience of themes on which the Far Right thrives.

significant partisan variation.

Finally, to the best of our knowledge, our paper is the first to develop a framework to document persistent, systematic bias in the treatment of political extremism across parties, intelligence agencies, and the police, and to do so over the long run and across states. Our paper's main contribution is thus empirical and descriptive, with the goal of establishing key patterns in state behavior. As concerns over the state-based sanctioning of far-right extremism rise, it is essential to systematically measure this phenomenon. In addition, we also offer a framework for documenting the state's approach to political extremism which researchers can adapt and apply to other countries.

Theoretical Approach

While this paper is foremost concerned with establishing empirical patterns, it is based on the theoretical insight that the state itself plays a significant role in how extremism is understood and takes shape (Kleffner and Meisner 2023; Martini, Ford and Jackson 2020; Stump and Dixit 2013). Our paper zeroes in on the supply side: the established political actors and the environments they create for political extremism[8] to take root. In contrast, research explaining extremist acts has often focused on the demand side, measuring the individual-level attributes associated with extremist behavior. For example, work on right-wing hate crime has considered perpetrators' socioeconomic profiles. Offenders tend to be young and male, to exhibit relatively high levels of authoritarianism, ethnocentrism and unemployment, and low levels of education (Heitmeyer 1992; Willems 1995).[9] Consistent with these features, studies link structural factors such as rising immigration, economic

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[8]We follow the *Verfassungschutz* definitions of RWE/LWE. Specifically, right-wing extremists assume that belonging to an ethnic group or nation determines a person's value, a belief that is incompatible with Germany's democratic constitutional order. Nationalism and group-based hostility such as racism and anti-Semitism characterize right-wing extremist agitation. Left-wing extremists want to eliminate the existing state and social order and dismantle democratic freedoms and the market-based economy. Depending on their ideological orientation, left-wing extremists want to institute communism or an anarchist society.

[9]Reflecting varying types, perpetrator motives also differ, from a desire to express the superiority of one's racial group to thrill-seeking or peer pressure (Willems 1995).

decline, or competition for status and resources to anti-minority hate crime (Dancygier et al. 2022; Dugan and Chenoweth 2020; Grossman and Zonszein 2023; Marbach and Ropers 2018; Matsunaga 2023). Scholarship on far-right parties similarly highlights cultural, economic or security-based grievances. Anti-establishment, anti-immigrant, and authoritarian attitudes and fear of crime can drive far-right party support, which is often strongest among men (Golder 2016; Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2020). Recent scholarship also shows that RWE attacks contribute to the rise of far-right parties by raising the salience of immigration and related cultural grievances that constitute the radical-right's core issues (Krause and Matsunaga 2023).

These attitudes and grievances clearly shape the potential for extremist acts and parties. The posture of the state can in turn affect whether this potential is realized, as it may take amenable political elites or institutions for RWE to flourish.[10] For example, investigating large-scale attacks against asylum seekers in Germany, Karapin (2002) identifies local politicians signalling their support for these actions as a crucial factor (see also Wilkinson 2004). In line with this finding, the local strength of anti-immigrant parties correlates with anti-minority hate crimes in Germany (Jäckle and König 2017) and the UK (Dancygier 2010), whereas well-functioning local governments that are perceived to allocate public resources fairly across immigrants and natives reduce anti-refugee violence (Ziller and Goodman 2020).[11]

The state's designation of groups is also consequential. When security agencies or politicians frame certain groups as extremist – for example, American and European Muslims in the context of counter-terrorism strategies – these groups can turn into "suspect communities" facing both increased surveillance and Islamophobic attacks (Nguyen 2019; Martini, Ford and Jackson 2020). Finally, states' non-designation of white supremacist violence as

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[10]A related literature shows how media coverage can help RWE diffuse (e.g., Ellinas 2010; Koopmans and Olzak 2004; Voelker 2023).

[11]Related, supply-side factors such as electoral rules, centrist party positioning, or parties' organizational coherence can help explain the rise of far-right parties (e.g., Art 2011; Arzheimer and Carter 2006; De Vries and Hobolt 2020; Meguid 2008).

terrorism (Búzás and Meier 2023) may reduce attention to this type of extremism and allow it to thrive.

Our paper draws on these insights and joins prior research in focusing on the opportunity structures that help translate latent demand for RWE into action. But whereas existing supply-side accounts frequently examine the actors and institutions that provide parties, voters, or potential perpetrators with the short to medium-run incentives to turn to RWE, we take a longer view. Analyzing the German state's approach to extremism over up to seven decades, we evaluate whether state actors have persistently downplayed right-wing extremism, thus contributing to its long-run entrenchment.

We do so by analyzing both partisan actors – political parties across the ideological spectrum – and presumptively non-partisan actors – intelligence agencies and the police. Though the latter play a critical role in maintaining public safety and preserving democracy, we do not have systematic knowledge about how these institutions have approached political extremism across Germany's states (*Bundesländer*) and over time. To be sure, historians and journalists have offered compelling accounts describing how political forces have shaped the origins of Germany's postwar intelligence and law enforcement agencies as well as the investigations of specific instances of extremism. These descriptions often highlight undue influences of right-wing actors and the associated downplaying of RWE. But they also identify biases favoring LWE (Bergsdorf and van Hüllen 2011; Kleffner and Meisner 2019, 2023; Röpke and Speit 2013; Wetzel 2015). We draw inspiration from this work and investigate whether the ideological influences these scholars detect in specific cases generalize and add up to bias, by which we mean the systematically differential treatment of RWE and LWE that cannot be explained by differences in threat levels across extremism types.[12]

In assessing this bias, we focus less on the incentives strategic politicians face (which may vary from one election cycle to the next) and instead determine whether more enduring

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[12]We remain agnostic about the motivations of particular bureaucrats or politicians; see Búzás and Meier (2023) for a parallel approach relating to the role of institutional racism in states' non-designation of white supremacist groups as terrorists.

ideological commitments affect how state agencies approach political extremism. Our goal is twofold: (i) to establish whether the German state has persistently minimized the far-right extremist threat; and (ii) if so, to determine whether this bias is a constant feature or subject to partisan ideologies.

We thus deliberately connect purportedly neutral state institutions that are supposed to operate above the partisan fray to parties and their ideological leanings. In this way, our work speaks to research that demonstrates how the state's understanding of political extremism and terrorism is contingent and constructed (Jackson 2016). In our case, the influence of partisan ideologies is unclear ex ante, for they compete with other relevant ideologies. For example, where states are characterized by racialized hierarchies that place whites on top, RWE and the white supremacy that sustains it may go relatively unchallenged or unnoticed, even by leftist actors (Meier 2020). Alternatively, aspects of leftist ideology can make state actors more suspicious of LWE. Strands of left-wing extremism oppose the very idea of state authority and endorse an anarchic political order. Additionally, left-wing militants are often in conflict with the police. State actors may therefore see themselves as the actual targets of LWE and may accordingly dedicate disproportionate attention to it, irrespective of their proximity to left- or right-wing parties. By contrast, ideological biases that map onto partisanship could influence how these threats are perceived and presented to the public, such that center-right governments downplay threats from the right but not the left, while center-left governments do the opposite. The analyses we conduct below shed light on these questions.

We also note, however, that our analyses are not designed to examine the biased behaviors of individual lawmakers and bureaucrats. Rather, we take the necessary prior step and first ascertain whether systematic, long-term biases exist. If they do, the next step is to investigate why and how individual behavior aggregates to produce them.

Institutions and Extremism

We locate our study in Germany, an especially important and interesting case given its experience with national socialism. Though this history differentiates Germany from other democratic countries confronting political extremism,[13] it has not prevented the re-emergence of violent far-right forces, many of which have transnational connections across the globe. Germany thus faces similar extremism threats as do other democracies which have also witnessed upticks in RWE (Kalmoe and Mason 2022; Miller-Idriss 2020). While empirically centered on the German case, our general framework can therefore travel to other countries. Before presenting our empirical framework, we provide background information on the state actors involved in addressing political extremism in Germany.

Intelligence Agencies The overarching goal of the country's domestic intelligence agencies (*Verfassungsschutz*, or "Office for the Protection of the Constitution") is to safeguard Germany's democratic order and constitution. Activities fall into several areas, including the prevention of various forms of political extremism (left-wing, right-wing, Islamist, foreign). The *Verfassungsschutz* consists of one federal office and 16 state offices. These offices operate independently and are not subsidiaries of the federal office, leading to a quite fragmented security apparatus. Moreover, procedures and priorities vary significantly across offices, especially since federal and state interior ministers, who themselves are political appointees, appoint and dismiss office directors.[14]

There is thus an inherent tension: intelligence agencies are supposed to gather and interpret information in an objective, fact-based manner to prevent both the trivialization and the demonization of potential threats, but their leadership is quite proximate to parliamentary

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[13] See Capoccia (2013) for a discussion about Germany's approach to legal restrictions on extremist political behavior and how it compares to other countries.

[14] In some states, the *Verfassungsschutz* constitutes a separate agency, while in others it is a unit of the state's interior ministry. In email correspondence with us, multiple intelligence office representatives emphasized that this distinction is merely a formality with little practical impact since, in either case, the interior ministry oversees the office's work.

politics.[15] The conduct of intelligence agencies can therefore become politicized (Jaschinski and Steinbach 2024). One goal of our analyses is to establish whether the partisanship of interior ministers or the strength of far-right parties helps predict how *Verfassungsschutz* offices do their work.

Though most of their activities are classified, Germany's intelligence agencies shape public perceptions of extremism. Importantly, they have the authority to designate individuals, groups, and parties as "extremist" and a threat to the constitutional order. *Verfassungsschutz* decisions to declare political parties, most recently branches of the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), as extremist are widely discussed. They can prompt voters to reassess their views and lead to calls for outright party bans.

Intelligence agencies also engage the public by publishing annual reports (*Verfassungschutzberichte*) that provide information about extremist individuals and organizations and their potential for violence. Categorizing groups or parties as extreme in an annual report is meant to serve as a "public warning... [that] suggests people should not follow or vote for these organizations" (Grumke and Van Hüllen 2019, 34). In this way, intelligence agencies are meant to function as an early warning system (*Frühwarnsystem*). By contrast, when the *Verfassungsschutz* underestimates extremist threats or does not properly communicate its concerns about potential threats to the public and other state actors, extremism can more easily spread and escalate.

Making public statements about threat assessments is thus a vital task of German intelligence agencies. Accordingly, as one of the few publicly visible activities of the *Verfassungsschutz*, the annual reports safeguard the institution's legitimacy. Maintaining objectivity and distance from party politics is thus of particular significance (Gusy 1986). We investigate both of these aspects below.

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[15]See Grumke and Van Hüllen (2019) and Schultz (2021). The federal chancellor appoints the federal interior minister; state prime ministers appoint state interior ministers.

Police   Despite attempts to denazify the German police after 1945 (Weinhauer 2007), claims that law enforcement downplays right-wing extremism while disproportionately focusing on left-wing extremism are common. These accusations gained publicity when it came to light that multiple groups of police officers shared far-right content and sympathies for the radical-right AfD in online chats.[16] A central question in public debate is whether these incidents are isolated cases or if they represent a broader climate in German law enforcement that minimizes the threat of far-right forces.

This question is critical because the police play a crucial role in countering extremism. While the *Verfassungsschutz* is tasked with safeguarding Germany's democratic order and constitution, the police are responsible for recording extremist crimes on the ground. Intelligence agencies rely on these crime figures to assess extremist threats, and politicians and bureaucrats communicate them to the wider public. It is therefore particularly concerning that NGO research finds that the police do not respond effectively to right-wing hate crimes by failing to secure evidence, take witnesses' statements, or to investigate allegations of far-right motives (Amnesty International 2016; Kleffner and Meisner 2023).

We map potential systematic biases within the police by examining publications of the two major police unions – the GdP and the DPolG – which together represent around 80 percent of the German police force and are in a fierce competition for members (Hoell 2011).[17] Importantly, the two unions differ in their ideological leanings: While the GdP (175,000 members) – affiliated with the German Trade Union Confederation – has traditionally been leaning toward centrist positions on domestic security, the DPolG (94,000 members) – which is part of the German Civil Service Federation and has its strongholds in southern Germany and in Hamburg (Reuter 2021) – tends to represent more right-wing stances. Particularly under Rainer Wendt, who has led the union since 2007 and is a member of the center-right CDU/CSU, the DPolG has become more radicalized and has been accused of normalizing

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[16]For far-right incidents within the police see: `https://entnazifizierungjetzt.de/`.

[17]There is also a third nationwide police union, the BDK (Bund Deutscher Kriminalbeamter), that represents criminal detectives and counts 15,000 members. Due to its small size, the BDK plays a less prominent role in German politics, which is why we do not focus on it in this study.

right-wing populist discourse on crime and immigration (Pichl 2018). Beyond examining the claim of systematic police bias in its focus on extremism, our empirical approach also allows us to investigate if these ideological differences within the police shape the relative salience of right-wing and left-wing extremism in union publications.

Political Parties   Political parties can shape the salience of political extremism as an issue of public debate via parliamentary speeches, election manifestos, and parliamentary inquiries (*Parlamentarische Anfragen*). By devoting more or less time and effort to the discussion of extremism, parties can affect whether the public and other state actors perceive extremism to be a major national problem. This interplay of issue salience and public perceptions can in turn help or hinder the passage of legislation designed to target these issues.

A distinction in comparison to intelligence agencies and law enforcement is that parties are – by their very definition – partisan and ideological in nature. As such, we should expect that parties of different ideological leanings treat left-wing and right-wing extremism differently. Supporters of a party on one end of the ideological spectrum are more likely to perceive extremism from the other side as threatening. At the same time, because, at its core, political extremism endangers democracy it falls into a very different category than policy issues on which parties regularly diverge as part of the normal democratic process. Large differences in how parties evaluate extremism and portray it to the public would be quite disconcerting from the perspective of democratic stability. For example, the Republican Party's National Committee's declaration that the January 6th insurrection constituted "legitimate political discourse" sparked great concern that one major party considers violent attempts to undermine the electoral process acceptable behavior (Mercieca and Shaffer 2022).

Moreover, as this episode illustrates, the center-right's positioning toward RWE plays a pivotal role in the rise of the Far Right and democratic backsliding. Historically, European conservative party strategies were crucial in shaping paths towards liberal democracy or

right-wing authoritarianism. In Germany, the weakness and lack of organization of center-right parties were key to the conservatives' embrace of Hitler in 1932-1933 (Ziblatt 2017). In the current era, the center-right's adoption of far-right parties' positions can legitimize and mainstream those stances (Mondon and Winter 2020; Wodak 2020). For these reasons, we pay particular attention to the CDU/CSU. Given the CDU/CSU's dominance – it led the federal government for more than fifty years since 1949 and is sometimes called the "state's party" (*Die Staatspartei*) – the degree to which it downplays RWE can powerfully shape how state actors and voters perceive its threat. In short, despite expected ideological differences, establishing an empirical baseline of parties' approach to political extremism is essential.

Development of Political Extremism in Germany   To contextualize state actors' behavior, Figure 1 displays the incidence of right-wing and left-wing extremist crime in Germany from 1969 to 2019. The Federal Criminal Police Office (*BKA*) defines extremist crimes as violent and non-violent acts that "aim to overthrow or abolish elements of the liberal democratic order in Germany" (Bundeskriminalamt 2021). They range from "propaganda offenses" like the public display of Nazi symbols to terrorist acts such as murders committed by the far-left RAF or the far-right NSU.[18] During the 1970s and 1980s RWE and LWE incidents were roughly similar in frequency, but over the last 30 years RWE has spiked. The initial rise occurred in the 1990s, coinciding with refugee inflows and German reunification, which unleashed nationalist sentiments. By 2019, the police recorded 3.3 times more RWE than LWE crimes.[19]

Critics assert that in spite of this clear imbalance, the state has minimized and even trivialized the far-right threat (Salzborn and Quent 2019; Staas 2020). Some link the state's *laissez-faire* approach to RWE to the origins of the postwar German state and the failure to

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[18]Extremist crimes are a subgroup of politically motivated crimes (PMC), a classification introduced in 2001 to expand the concept to acts that do not directly aim to overthrow the system but still have a political motive. In the analyses below, we use the subcategory of extremist crimes because it has been recorded more consistently. We collected the crime figures from the *Verfassungsschutz*-reports, which publish crime statistics recorded by the police and aggregated by the *BKA*.

[19]Figure D.1 shows the development of violent extremist crimes (killings and assaults), which largely mirrors the overall trend in crimes.

Figure 1: Trends in Extremist Crimes in Germany (1969-2019)
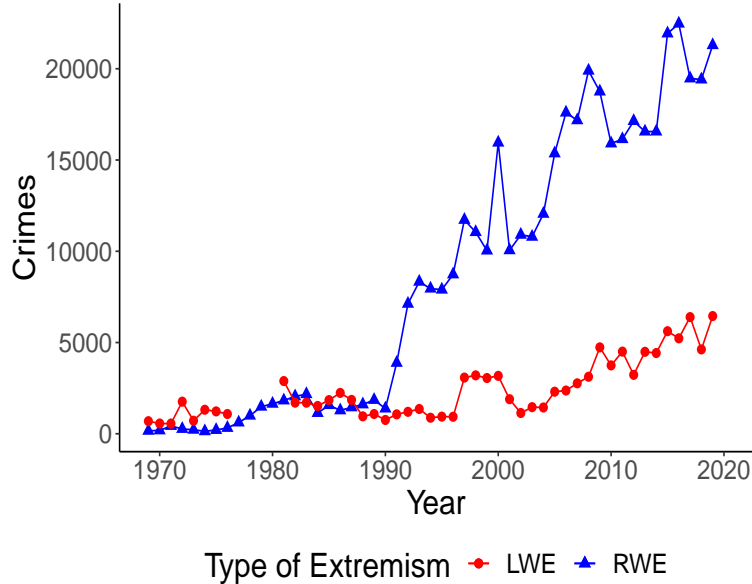
Note: Numbers are drawn from the annual reports of the *Verfassungss-chutz*, which publishes extremist crime statistics as recorded by the police. The *Verfassungsschutz* did not publish left-wing extremist crime statistics from 1977-1980.

remove former Nazis from state institutions, including from intelligence and law enforcement agencies. The Cold War fight against communism, coupled with a series of high-profile attacks by left-wing militant organizations in the 1970s, further reinforced tendencies to vigorously pursue LWE (Goschler and Wala 2015; Schultz 2021). The Far Right also grew and radicalized during this time, as did right-wing violence. Yet public discourse and actions by state authorities did not reflect this reality (Manthe 2018).

Doubts about the willingness of the state to comprehensively tackle RWE are thus long-standing, but they have received renewed attention in the wake of recent intelligence failures. A particular stain on the *Verfassungschutz* was its inability to track down the murderous NSU terror cell which killed nine immigrant-origin victims and a police officer over a seven-year period in the 2000s. Even though authorities had known of the three NSU members, they wrongly suspected that the murders were committed by rival immigrant gangs, fuelling accusations of the state's right-wing, anti-migrant bias and resulting spread of RWE (Wetzel

2015). Such accusations gained further momentum in 2018, when, amid a rise in attacks against refugees, the director of the federal *Verfassungsschutz*, Hans-Georg Maaßen, refused to acknowledge that refugees were being hunted down by Germans, despite video evidence to the contrary. Maaßen then blamed the media, left-wing politicians, and "radical left forces within the SPD" for using this episode to seek his ouster and even provoke the breakup of the coalition government.[20] Since then, a series of events – an attack on a synagogue in Halle, the murder of nine people in shisha bars in Hanau, the assassination of Walter Lübcke, the discovery of far-right extremists operating within the military and police, and the foiled *Reichsbürger* plot to overthrow the government – have kept a spotlight on the state's approach to RWE and have led the federal government to launch a commission investigating right-wing and anti-Semitic crime (Miller-Idriss and Koehler 2021).

In sum, historical developments and recent events lead us to question whether and how ideological biases impact how state actors approach political extremism. The next section investigates these potential biases empirically.

Empirical Approach

Using various data sources capturing party and state behavior across multiple decades and states and analyzing them using a dictionary-based approach, hand coding, and structural topic modeling (among other methods), we first establish a partisan difference in the relative attention devoted to RWE: discussion of political extremism by political parties exhibits clear ideological biases. Analyzing intelligence reports and police publications we next demonstrate that these differences permeate to purportedly neutral state actors. It is not the case that these institutions – because they want to uphold racial hierarchies or see themselves as targets of left-wing extremists – treat LWE more aggressively as a general matter. Rather, when under the auspices of a center-right interior minister, intelligence agencies

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[20]This conspiracy theory ultimately led to Maaßen's dismissal. The case lent credibility to those who suspected right-wing sympathies within the *Verfassungschutz* (Otto 2018).

raise the salience of LWE and decrease attention to RWE. The opposite is true in the case of center-left interior ministers. Police union publications feature similar biases. Finally, we demonstrate that state or time effects, variation in RWE/LWE crime, or public support for far-right parties are unlikely to explain partisan biases.

Party Behavior

Speeches and Manifestos   Speeches are important tools that parties use strategically to communicate their views on specific issues and overall ideological positions (Bäck and Debus 2018; Martin and Vanberg 2008; Proksch and Slapin 2012). Similarly, manifestos are relevant for our purposes because they convey the policy priorities to which parties commit collectively (Volkens et al. 2013).

We focus on six main parties: the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU), the Social Democrats (SPD), the Left Party, the Greens, the Liberal Democrats (FDP), and the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD). Full-text transcripts of all parliamentary speeches by legislators of these parties in the German *Bundestag* from 1949-2020 come from the *OpenDiscourse* project (Richter et al. 2020). Across these 72 years, we analyze 360,944 speeches made by 3,685 different MPs. Machine-readable manifesto data at the federal and state level from 1975-2017 is provided by Benoit, Bräuninger and Debus (2009) and Pappi and Seher (2009). We examine a total of 700 manifestos.

We devised a list of keywords to measure political extremism and counted how often they appeared in speeches and manifestos. Keywords include generic terms (e.g., right-/left-wing extreme or right-/left-wing terror) and specific terms referring to parties, movements, events or ideas. Appendix A displays the keyword list. Our results are largely robust to excluding time-sensitive terms (see Appendix A for the restricted list of generic terms that clearly signal RWE and LWE and Appendix B, D, and E for the results). For speeches, we aggregated counts up to the party-year level, producing a measure of how many left-wing and right-wing keywords each party's MPs used in a given year. For manifestos, we aggregated the counts

at the party-state-year level, indicating how many keywords each party's manifestos used in a given state and year.[21]

Based on these counts, we create two outcomes of interest. We start by following Lowe et al. (2011) and calculate the logarithm of the odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords: $\log \frac{\text{\# right keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# left keywords} + 0.5}$. Using this approach has a number of advantages. First, the ratio (vs. a simple difference) focuses on the relative balance of keywords instead of their absolute quantity. Second, taking the log ensures that the final outcome variable is a symmetric scale with 0 as a midpoint of neutrality (in the Appendix, we show that all results are robust to using a non-logged approach of simple differences). We call this outcome a party's *Position* on the issue of right-wing vs. left-wing extremism; it captures how prominently a party addresses the two in its speeches and manifestos. Positive values indicate that a party uses more right-wing words, negative values indicate a stronger emphasis on left-wing keywords. In a validation exercise, we find that this measure correlates strongly with a hand-coding of a sample of speeches (see Appendix B for a more detailed discussion of different validity checks).

To more directly measure the concept of bias, our second outcome considers the number of RWE and LWE crimes. We refer to this measure as a party's *Bias* and calculate it as follows: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. If we assume that parties' attention to RWE and LWE should be in line with the actual occurrence of such crimes, then a positive value now indicates that a party emphasizes right-wing extremism more than its occurrence would warrant (i.e., the party is biased towards playing up RWE). A negative value suggests that parties over-emphasize left-wing extremism compared to the actual reported crimes. Appendix Tables B.1 and B.2 display descriptive statistics of these measures.

One limitation inherent in crime statistics is that their accuracy relies on police reporting. Given the potential police biases we discuss below, it is reasonable to assume inaccuracies.

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[21]A comparison of means already highlights differences. While CDU/CSU speeches use on average 68 RWE and 82 LWE keywords per year, this difference is inverted for the SPD (80 RWE, 43 LWE), FDP (27 RWE, 17 LWE), Greens (89 RWE, 17 LWE), and the Left Party (117 RWE, 28 LWE). Only the AfD also uses more LWE (140) than RWE (97) keywords.

However, the crime data we use are nonetheless appropriate; they are the same official statistics to which political parties and the *Verfassungsschutz* have access (the *Verfassungsschutz* does not record crime incidents). If these institutions want to bring their approach to extremism into accord with crime statistics, these are the data they would rely on. Moreover, if statistics systematically undercount RWE, results that show state agencies downplaying RWE would be an underestimate of the actual effect.

Still, our results are also largely robust to using a *Bias* measure that only considers *violent* extremist crimes (i.e., killings, attempted killings, and physical assaults), which, due to their severity, are recorded more accurately (see Appendix B, D, and E). Using this measure serves two purposes: it reduces measurement error, and it takes into account the possibility that state actors react more strongly to one type of extremism vs. another because its manifestation is more severe in a given time period. Finally, to further corroborate these data, we correlated the number of RWE killings in official statistics since 1990 with figures published by a German NGO. Despite differences in classification approach, the correlation is very high ($r = .88$) (Amadeu Antonio Stiftung 2022).

Figure 2 illustrates variation in our outcome measures across the different parties and over time.[22] In the early decades after World War II, speeches by SPD, CDU/CSU and FDP MPs all tended to use more left-wing than right-wing keywords (first row). However, an uptick in right-wing keywords begins in the 1980s and becomes pronounced in the 1990s and 2000s and for the newer parties (the Greens and the Left Party). The bias measure fluctuates, but it is notable that even leftist parties frequently exhibit negative values, over-emphasizing LWE relative to actual crime figures (second row). This anti-left wing bias is strongest among the CDU/CSU, whose bias measure is almost always negative. Many of these patterns recur in manifestos (third and fourth row): right-wing keywords become more prominent relative to left-wing keywords in the 1980s, especially in the manifestos of the newer parties. Similarly, the bias measure shows less obvious temporal patterns, but the

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[22]We omit the AfD from these plots because its observations only span 4-5 years, respectively. Descriptive statistics for the AfD measures can be found in Appendix Tables B.1 and B.2.

Figure 2: Keyword Ratio in Speeches and Manifestos

(a) Parliamentary speeches (1949-2020)
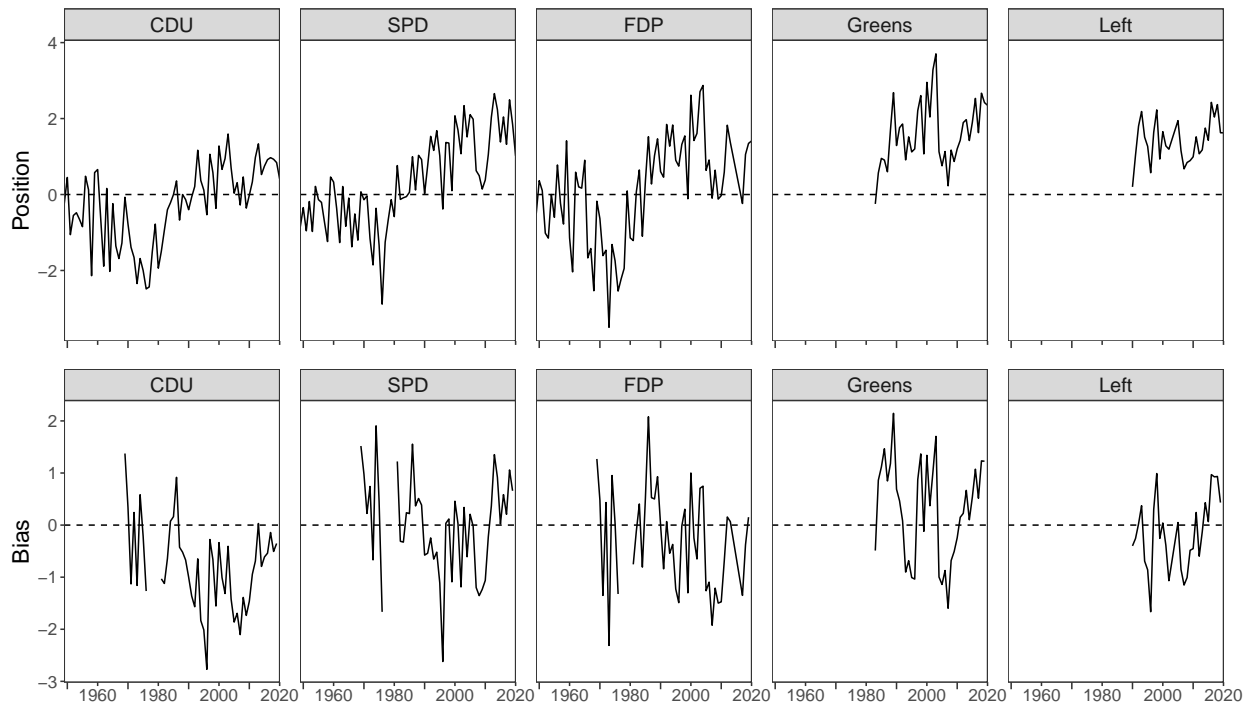
(b) State and federal level manifestos (1975-2017)
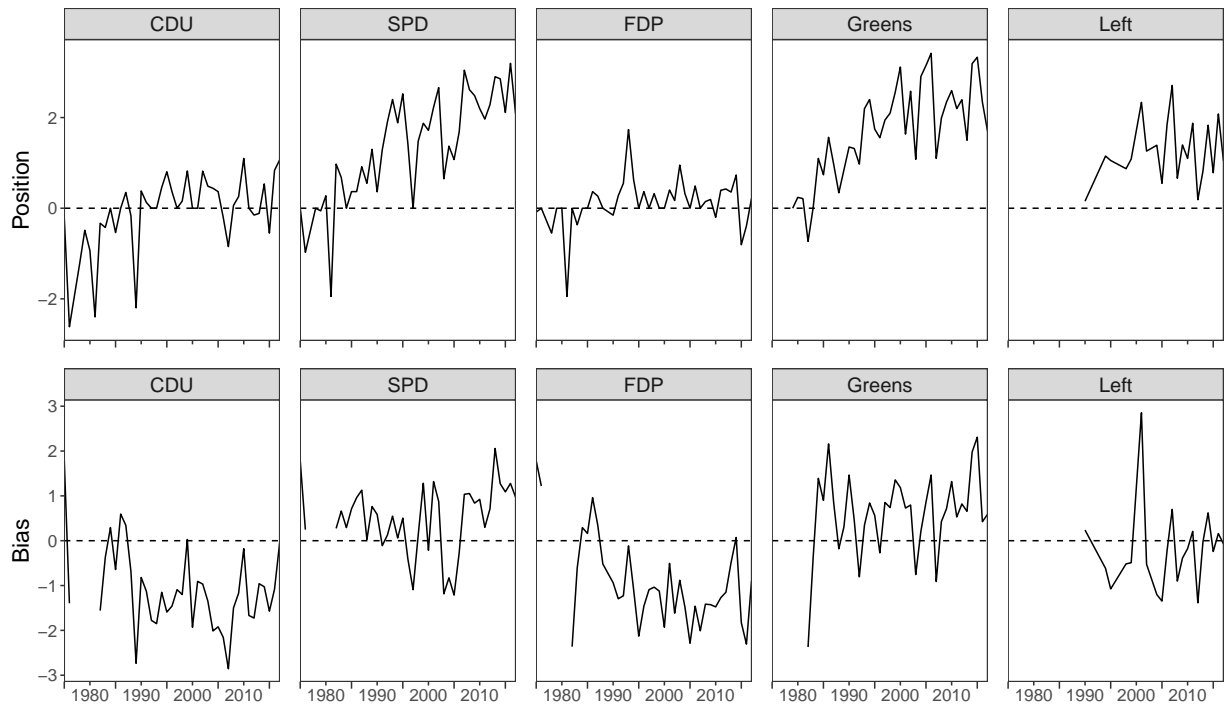
Note: Plots depict parties' *Positions* (first and third row) on left-wing vs. right-wing extremism in speeches and manifestos according to the logged ratio scaling as well as *Bias* (second and fourth row) in relation to reported crimes. Plots aggregated up to center-left vs center-right parties can be found in Appendix Figure B.1.

CDU/CSU has consistently negative values.

In short, across all four measures we observe that the center-right CDU/CSU consistently emphasizes more left-wing keywords than its rivals. Moreover, despite the pronounced predominance of RWE taking hold by the 1990s (see Figure 1), the CDU/CSU frequently devotes equal or sometimes even less attention to RWE when compared to LWE, a dynamic that is also reflected in its negative *Bias* scores.

A series of regressions (see Tables 1 and 2) assesses these differences more systematically. Across all models, we regressed the *Position* and *Bias* outcomes on party indicators while also including fixed effects to account for differences across time and space. While still descriptive in nature, these analyses assess statistical significance and further estimate the partisanship differences *within* time periods and, for manifestos, also within states. The CDU/CSU is excluded as the reference category which means that the reported coefficient estimates indicate the differences between each party in comparison to the CDU/CSU. Across all 14 specifications we find that the Greens, the Left Party, and the SPD (i) use more right-wing keywords than the CDU/CSU, (ii) have less of a left-wing bias than the CDU/CSU, and (iii) that all these differences are statistically significant. In substantive terms, a coefficient estimate of 0.61 for the SPD in Table 1, Model 1 means that in an average year SPD speeches contain $\exp^{0.61} = 1.8$ times as many RWE keywords as CDU/CSU speeches when we keep the number of LWE keywords constant, while Green party speeches contain on average $\exp^{1.11} = 3$ times as many. AfD speeches use only $\exp^{-1.21} = 0.3$ times as many RWE keywords as do CDU/CSU speeches. To interpret the results for the *Bias* measure we can look at the model specification without fixed effects (Model 4 in Table 1). Here the constant term indicates the bias of the CDU/CSU. A value of -0.80 suggests that their MPs over-emphasize left-wing extremism in comparison to the actual crime numbers. In contrast, the SPD coefficient of 0.79 suggests that the SPD's overall bias is -0.01 (i.e., the difference between the constant term and the SPD's coefficient) – the emphasis SPD speeches place on RWE and LWE is a very accurate reflection of crime numbers. These patterns are robust

to the inclusion of decade and year fixed effects, but note the varying interpretation of the constant term.[23]

Table 1: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | |
| | Position | | | Bias | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AfD	−0.02	−1.07**	−1.21**	−0.58	−0.75	−1.00**
	(0.56)	(0.41)	(0.30)	(0.52)	(0.47)	(0.31)
FDP	0.38*	0.43**	0.43**	0.50**	0.52**	0.52**
	(0.18)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.10)
Greens	1.89**	1.17**	1.11**	1.09**	1.20**	1.18**
	(0.22)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.11)
Left	1.69**	0.80**	0.84**	0.64**	0.88**	0.92**
	(0.24)	(0.18)	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.12)
SPD	0.61**	0.61**	0.61**	0.79**	0.79**	0.79**
	(0.18)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.10)
Constant	−0.27*	−0.88	−0.88**	−0.80**	0.95*	0.95**
	(0.13)	(0.45)	(0.31)	(0.13)	(0.45)	(0.29)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	284	284	284	206	206	206
Adjusted R^2	0.26	0.64	0.83	0.15	0.36	0.74

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5}$. *Bias* takes into account the number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime } + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. Party-years are the unit of observation. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Our analyses of manifestos in Table 2 (where we additionally control for state fixed effects) largely mirror these results, with the exception that differences between the FDP and the CDU/CSU become unreliable. The far-right AfD is once again the only party which puts a consistently stronger relative emphasis on LWE and also shows more anti-LWE bias than the CDU/CSU. Manifestos by the SPD, the Greens and the Left Party, by contrast,

[23]In Table 1 and subsequent regression tables, the constant term needs to be interpreted as the bias for the respective reference category and special attention has to be paid once time fixed effects are included. In the case of Table 1, this means that the constant term indicates the bias for the CDU/CSU overall (Model 4), in the 1960s (Model 5), and in 1969 (Model 6) respectively.

Table 2: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
AfD	−0.23	−0.29	−0.77**	−0.83**	−0.41	−0.36	−0.56	−0.68*
	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.29)	(0.29)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.32)
FDP	0.10	0.09	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.07	0.02
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Greens	1.76**	1.75**	1.64**	1.64**	1.72**	1.72**	1.75**	1.74**
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Left	1.11**	0.99**	0.69**	0.70**	0.80**	0.82**	0.86**	0.82**
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.18)	(0.17)
SPD	1.33**	1.33**	1.33**	1.33**	1.58**	1.58**	1.58**	1.58**
	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.14)
Constant	0.07	−0.41*	−1.26**	−1.03**	−1.08**	−1.22**	−0.13	1.34
	(0.09)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.33)	(0.11)	(0.21)	(0.42)	(0.72)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	700	700	700	700	555	555	555	555
Adjusted R^2	0.28	0.30	0.40	0.42	0.29	0.32	0.35	0.42

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. *Bias* takes into account the number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed using the ratio at the federal level, where possible. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

pay more relative attention to RWE, and their overall bias scores (Model 5) are lower in absolute magnitude than that of the CDU/CSU.[24]

Summing up, partisanship significantly predicts how *Bundestag* MPs discuss political extremism in their speeches and how federal and state parties approach this issue when crafting manifestos, even when accounting for the incidence of right-wing and left-wing extremist crime.

Parliamentary Inquiries   As a final measure of party behavior, we employ a dataset of 10,036 parliamentary inquiries on political extremism from the federal parliament and

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[24]The average bias for the CDU/CSU is -1.08, for the SPD 0.50, for the Greens 0.64, and for the Left Party -0.28.

the sixteen state parliaments, going back to the 1950s. Parliamentary inquiries are commonly used by opposition parties to extract information from the government, fulfilling their accountability functions. Relevant for our purposes, parties use inquiries strategically to generate attention to a topic (Martin 2011) since media outlets routinely report on them and the information the government provides in its replies.

Another benefit of scrutinizing inquiries relates to the fact that state governments have substantial authority and responsibility in the areas of domestic security and public safety. As a consequence, they possess information on extremist activities and groups that legislators can tap into via inquiries. In short, examining parliamentary inquiries regarding political extremism from the Bundestag and all state parliaments across multiple decades allows us to gain a comprehensive picture of party attention toward different types of political extremism.

Relying on multiple sources, we collected virtually all parliamentary inquiries issued between the early 2000s and May 2019 (our cutoff point).[25] However, for prior years, our coverage is not universal (our results are very similar when we restrict the sample to the post-2000 period).[26] To identify inquiries about political extremism, we conducted a keyword search of titles and contents (see Appendix A for the keyword list). Research assistants then read each of the pre-filtered documents and coded their content into one of five categories: 1) RWE; 2) LWE; 3) both RWE and LWE; 4) type of extremism unclear; 5) neither RWE nor LWE.

Figure 3 shows the distribution of categories by party, excluding inquiries coded as being neither on RWE nor on LWE.[27] Parties on the Left overwhelmingly focus their attention on RWE. In comparison, the center-right CDU/CSU issues more inquiries on LWE (32%) than RWE (27%). Given the actual prevalence of RWE, these results lend support to the

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[25] We drew on the open-source database provided by `kleineanfragen.de`, which contains more than 118,000 inquiries from all German parliaments going back to 2011. For earlier periods, we mostly use the *Parlamentsspiegel* archive.

[26] In prior years *Parlamentsspiegel* only archived inquiries it classified as having 'interregional' relevance. For a few states, we received PDFs of missing inquiries from the respective parliamentary archives. To collect Bundestag inquiries, we used the open data platform of the Bundestag. Figure C.1 shows the distribution of the inquiries on extremism across parliaments and years.

[27] Figure C.2 shows the distribution of categories over time, starting in the 1970s.

Figure 3: Distribution of Type of Extremism Referenced in Parliamentary Inquiries, by Party (1952-2019)
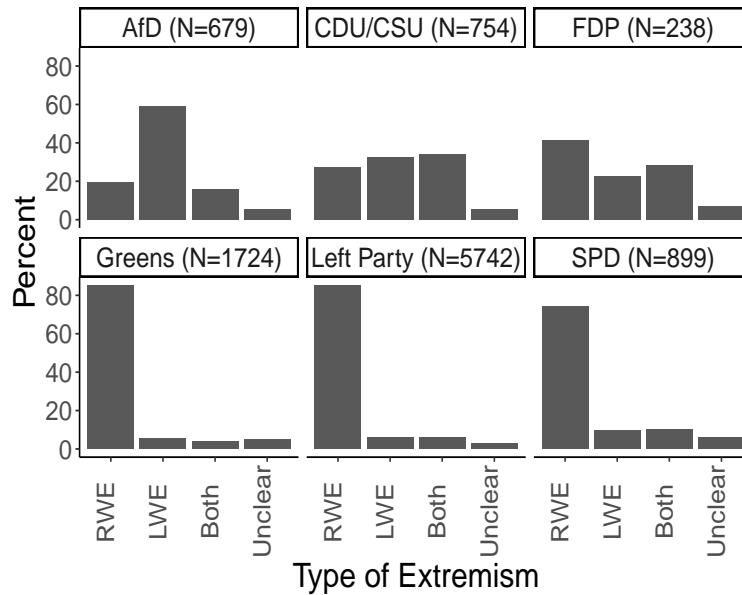
criticism that the center-right downplays far-right extremism by disproportionately focusing on far-left extremism. At the same time, that left parties inquire about RWE nearly thirteen times as much as they do about LWE highlights that they discount LWE, at least when compared to RWE.

Another interesting finding is that the most common category for the CDU/CSU is 'both' (34%), meaning that it frequently asks about RWE and LWE in the same inquiry. This may reflect the party's adherence to the controversial "horseshoe" theory, according to which the far-right and far-left share a number of similarities such as a supposed tendency toward authoritarianism and totalitarianism and should therefore be treated identically. Finally, the FDP is positioned between the left-leaning parties and the CDU/CSU, while the radical-right AfD essentially mirrors the Left with its primary focus on LWE (OLS and ordered logistic regressions confirm that these partisan differences are statistically significant and remain so when controlling for space and time fixed effects and extremist crime).

Taken together, MP speeches, election manifestos, and parliamentary inquiries covering many decades and all 16 states point in the same direction. To the extent that parties are

"blind in the right eye," this bias is largely partisan. Despite the dramatic rise of RWE, the CDU/CSU does not prioritize these threats and instead frequently gives these threats equal or less weight than those coming from the Far Left. These partisan biases are distressing, for they pertain not to quotidian policy disagreements, but to extremism that aims to undermine liberal democracy and public safety.

State Institutions

Intelligence Reports   We next assess whether these entrenched biases extend to what are meant to be neutral state institutions. Though the biases in party behavior we just documented are troubling in and of themselves, it would be particularly alarming if they seeped into state institutions that require neutrality to function effectively and with legitimacy. We first examine annual *Verfassungsschutz* reports. We collected the majority from `vsberichte.de`, an independent project that digitizes and archives intelligence reports published by the federal and state *Verfassungsschutz* offices. For reports unavailable on `vsberichte.de` we contacted the *Verfassungsschutz* offices directly. In total, we obtained 516 reports from 1964 to 2019, representing 90% of all published reports during this period.[28]

Our independent variable is the party affiliation of the interior minister at the time a report was published. Interior ministers arguably have the most influence of any politician over the report contents since they oversee the domestic intelligence agency and appoint the head of the *Verfassungsschutz*. They also commonly write the foreword for the annual reports, reflecting their role as the political representative of the *Verfassungsschutz*. We create a binary variable called *Center-Right Interior Minister* that equals one for the CDU/CSU (N=269) as well as the FDP (N=35) and zero for the SPD (N=210).[29]

We use multiple measures to capture the salience of RWE and LWE. First, we make use

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[28]Note that the reports for a given year are published the following year (e.g., the reports for 2019, including the crime numbers, were published in 2020). This creates a lag between the creation of a report (in year t) and the relevant crimes (in $t-1$) the report responds to.

[29]We exclude two reports published under a right-wing populist interior minister in Hamburg. There has been no interior minister from the Greens or the Left Party during our period of interest.

Figure 4: Analysis of Chapters in Intelligence Reports (1964-2019)

(a) Logged Ratio of Chapter Length   **(b)** First Chapter
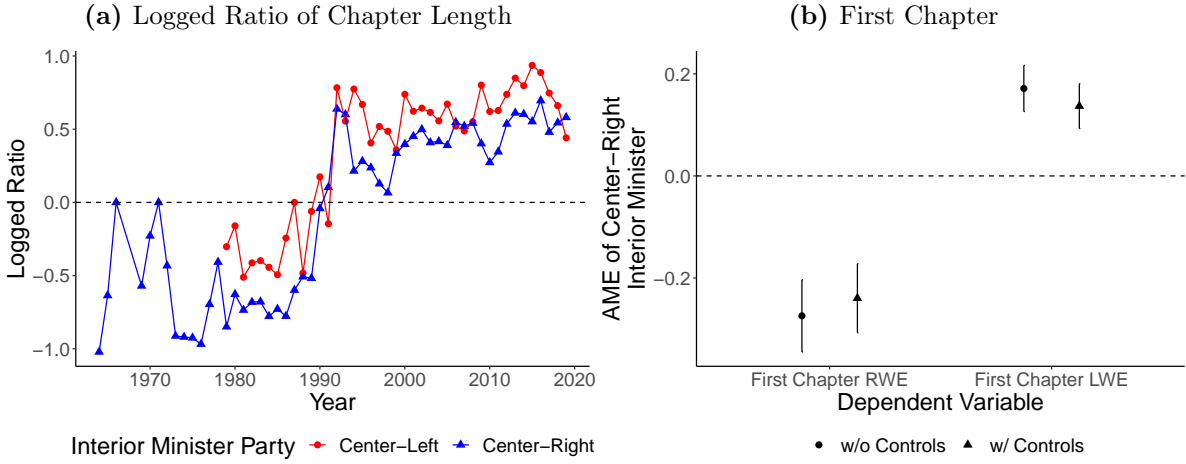
Note: Panel (a) shows the logged ratio of RWE and LWE chapter lengths in pages ($\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Pages} + 0.5}$) by the party of the interior minister, aggregated by year. Panel (b) presents average marginal effects with 95% CIs based on logistic regressions of the first chapter content on the party of the interior minister. The corresponding regression models are in Table D.3 (Columns 1, 5, 6, 10). Controls include state and year fixed effects and RWE/LWE crime ratio (missing values for this variable were imputed using multiple imputation).

of the structure of the reports, which consist of separate chapters on the different types of extremism (i.e., RWE, LWE, Islamist extremism, foreign extremism, etc.), and measure the logged ratio of the length of chapters (in pages) dedicated to RWE and LWE. This variable serves as a proxy for the relative importance of RWE to those overseeing the creation of the report. The left panel in Figure 4 shows the logged ratio over time. Intelligence reports initially clearly focused on LWE, despite the roughly equal prevalence of RWE and LWE. Starting in the late 1980s, and consistent with trends in extremist crime rates (see Figure 1), the relative salience of RWE has risen, accelerating after reunification in 1990. At the same time, there is a persistent difference between reports published under center-left and center-right interior ministers: during the 1980s, reports issued under a center-right interior minister strengthen the overall bias toward far-left extremism at the time. After the 1990s, center-right affiliation tends to attenuate the increased focus on far-right extremism.

Table 3 shows that this partisan difference is statistically significant and robust to accounting for fixed effects of space and time. The robustness to state-fixed effects is par-

Table 3: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	-0.38^{***}	-0.42^{***}	-0.26^{***}	-0.24^{***}	-0.25^{***}	-0.25^{**}	-0.39^{***}	-0.41^{***}
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	0.57^{***}	0.56^{***}	-0.31	-0.83^{*}	-0.84^{***}	-0.38^{*}	1.33^{***}	1.54^{**}
	(0.04)	(0.09)	(0.21)	(0.36)	(0.06)	(0.15)	(0.25)	(0.51)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	514	514	514	514	493	493	493	493
Adjusted R^2	0.08	0.38	0.70	0.72	0.02	0.12	0.32	0.35

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Pages } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Pages } + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Pages } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Pages } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime } + 0.5}$. We imputed missing crime values using the value at the federal level, where possible. The SPD is coded as center-left, the CDU/CSU and FDP as center-right. $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$; $^{***}p<0.001$

ticularly noteworthy since it suggests that within a state, a change from a center-left to a center-right interior minister predicts a significant reduction in the relative attention toward RWE. Columns 5 to 8 display models in which we apply our bias measure to the chapter lengths. The results support the notion of a partisan difference. At the same time, the constant term in column 5, which is equivalent to the average bias among center-left led agencies, shows that even in reports published under SPD ministers there has been a disproportionate focus on LWE. Finally, Table D.2 demonstrates that these effects are not significantly different in former East Germany where right-wing extremist forces are particularly strong.

We also construct binary variables indicating whether the chapter on RWE or LWE appears first in a report. The right panel in Figure 4 displays estimates of the average marginal effect of center-right party affiliation on those dependent variables (based on logistic regressions in Table D.3). Consistent with the results so far, our estimates suggest that under a center-right (as opposed to a center-left) interior minister, it is 25 pp. less likely that the first chapter focuses on RWE, and 15 pp. more likely that it focuses on LWE.

To confirm that our results are robust to different measures of the content of reports, we conducted a keyword-based analysis, using the same procedure and list of terms as in the analyses of speeches and manifestos, and we estimated a structural topic model. For both

approaches, results are in line with the findings presented above (see Appendix D).

In short, using different measures of salience, we find clear partisan biases: when intelligence heads are overseen by the center-right, they pay relatively less attention to RWE. In a final analysis we examine if partisanship matters for *how* RWE and LWE are discussed. A prominent claim holds that a consequential feature of the state's downplaying of RWE relates to its continued underestimation even of *known* threats. Especially in the 1970s and 1980s, intelligence agencies ascribed RWE terrorist crimes to 'lone wolves' and failed to recognize the perpetrators' connections with broader right-wing extremist structures. This disregard for the organizational strength of the extremist Far Right occurred despite notable previous attacks by far-right terrorist groups such as the *Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann* and the *Hepp-Kexel-Gruppe*, and it extends to broader public debates about RWE (Voelker 2023). It also stands in stark contrast to LWE, where high-profile terrorist acts by the RAF shaped perceptions of left-wing violence (Geck 2019).

This history has shaped the *Verfassungsschutz*'s approach to political extremism. Nonetheless, partisan ideology could further distort its lens. In Table 4 we therefore assess whether this type of downplaying of RWE is shaped by the party controlling the interior ministry. To create the dependent variable, we calculate the logged ratio of the sum of occurrences of the terms "organized" and "organization" in the chapters on RWE and LWE. We find that a center-right interior minister is associated with a decrease in the relative incidence of the organization-keywords in the chapters dealing with RWE.[30] The center-right's downplaying of right-wing extremism is thus not limited to its salience. It extends to *how* RWE is discussed and understood relative to LWE, contributing to the perception that RWE presents a less fearsome threat. As observers of the NSU and other far-right murder plots have attested, this underestimation has had fatal consequences (Schultz 2021).

In sum, across multiple measures of attention toward and characterization of far-right and far-left extremism in intelligence reports of the *Verfassungsschutz*, we find a persistent

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[30]We performed a similar analysis for the terms 'lone/single perpetrator' but it contains too many zeros due to the overall low incidence of these terms.

Table 4: Regression of Organization Keywords in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship

	Outcome variable: $\log \frac{\text{\# Org. keywords in RWE Chapter} + 0.5}{\text{\# Org. keywords in LWE Chapter} + 0.5}$					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.53***	−0.54***	−0.32***	−0.30***	−0.14**	−0.13*
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Ratio # Words RWE/LWE Chapter					0.32***	0.32***
					(0.02)	(0.02)
RWE/LWE Crime Ratio						−0.003
						(0.004)
Constant	0.46***	0.56***	−0.23	−0.83	−1.02*	−1.00*
	(0.05)	(0.12)	(0.30)	(0.53)	(0.45)	(0.45)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓	✓	✓
Decade FEs			✓			
Observations	514	514	514	514	514	514
Adjusted R^2	0.10	0.34	0.59	0.60	0.73	0.73

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using multiple imputation. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP as center-right. Keywords used: "organzation"; "organized". *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

and robust difference between reports published under center-right vs. center-left interior ministers. This difference cannot be explained by variation in crime levels. The biases in party behavior we uncovered above permeate state institutions whose effectiveness in upholding democracy and safety – and legitimacy to do so – rests on their presumptive neutrality.

Police Union Journals Finally, we turn to the police. We rely on a novel data source: journals published by two major police unions, the GdP's "Deutsche Polizei" and the DPolG's "Polizeispiegel". Union publications fit well with our empirical approach – examining publications and statements by parties and representatives of the state – thus ensuring consistency and comparability. Moreover, the journals are distributed to almost 270,000 police officers and employees represented by the two unions (roughly 80 percent of the German police force). These publications thus have the potential to shape how substantial parts of the German police perceive – and potentially act upon – extremism.

"Deutsche Polizei" is published monthly, while "Polizeispiegel" appears ten times a year.

Both journals have a main issue distributed to all members and shorter section-specific issues.[31] The journals frequently discuss union-specific topics such as wage bargaining and working conditions, but they also routinely address broader social and political topics. We downloaded the journals from the union websites and contacted the unions to obtain issues that were unavailable online. In sum, we collected 4,092 (main and section-specific) issues published between 2000 and 2021.[32]

Table 5: Regression of Keywords in Police Union Journals on Union

	Outcome variable:					
	Position			Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
DPolG	−0.27***	−0.24***	−0.24***	−0.12**	−0.20***	−0.21***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	0.18***	0.09	0.14	−1.42***	−1.36***	−1.46***
	(0.02)	(0.08)	(0.23)	(0.02)	(0.09)	(0.24)
State FEs		✓	✓		✓	✓
Year FEs			✓			✓
Observations	4,092	4,092	4,092	3,617	3,617	3,617
Adjusted R^2	0.01	0.04	0.10	0.002	0.19	0.24

Note: DPolG is the right-leaning union. OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + \, 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + \, 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + \, 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + \, 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime } + \, 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime } + \, 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level where possible. GdP is excluded as the reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

To measure relative police attention toward RWE and LWE, we follow our previous analyses and count the occurrence of RWE and LWE keywords. Once more, we find that ideology predicts how state actors discuss extremism. Table 5 shows that in the last two decades, the moderate GdP has, on average, emphasized RWE more than LWE, while the conservative DPolG has done the opposite. The difference between union publications is statistically significant and robust to fixed effects (see columns 2-3). Finally, columns 4-6 indicate that the difference between the keyword and crime ratios, i.e., our formal measure of bias, is greater for the DPolG than the GdP.

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[31]In addition to the federal police force, each state has its own section in the unions.
[32]Figure E.1 displays the distribution of issues in our sample by union, section, and year.

In sum, these findings echo behaviors of parties and intelligence agencies: police publications feature ideological biases in the portrayal of extremism, resulting in the relative minimization of the far-right threat by the right-leaning police union.

Alternative Mechanism: Electoral Incentives

Across our analyses, we find systematic partisan differences in how German parties and state institutions discuss extremism. In our framework this divergence emerges from enduring, long-run ideological biases that withstand on-the-ground developments. We have shown that changing relative levels of extremist crime do not change these structural biases. In a final test, we examine whether incentives arising from electoral competition instead drive some of our results. Specifically, prior research shows that centrist – and especially center-right – parties tend to adopt positions of far-right parties to win back issue ownership and decrease these parties' electoral appeal (Abou-Chadi and Krause 2020; Meguid 2008; Meyer and Rosenberger 2015; Spoon and Klüver 2020). It is possible that this type of accommodation also shapes how parties and state institutions approach political extremism.

To test whether this is the case, we collected public opinion data from monthly *Politbarometer* surveys (Jung, Schroth and Wolf 2013) and created a *Far-Right Polling* variable, which captures the average vote intention for all far-right parties in a given state (or at the federal level) and year, from 1977 to 2019. We then repeated our main analyses while interacting this new variable with the different party/partisan variables allowing the effect of far-right party popularity to vary by party. The results are in Appendix Tables B.5, B.6, C.1, D.7, and D.8. Across the different outcomes, no consistent patterns emerge. Most coefficient estimates for *Far-Right Polling* and its interactions are statistically insignificant. Moreover, while some estimates reach conventional levels of significance, the coefficient signs often change and depend on the exact model specification and choice of fixed effects. As an alternative approach, we also interact the partisan variables with a dummy that indicates an election year and come to similar conclusions (see Table B.13, Table C.2, Table D.11, and

Table D.12).

In short, we do not find evidence suggesting that the electoral appeal of the Far Right dynamically predicts how parties engage with political extremism. The persistent ideological biases we document are resistant to short-run electoral incentives.

Conclusion

The fight against political extremism is key to the preservation of public safety and democracy. Yet right-wing extremism continues to escalate, and state actors in Germany, Austria, the U.S. and beyond stand accused of discounting its pervasiveness. Focusing on Germany, we systematically assess the veracity of this claim across institutions, states, and over the long run, bringing new types of evidence to bear on an issue that is central to understanding the current era of a strengthening Far Right and associated democratic backsliding.

Our results are sobering. Employing a wealth of novel data sources and a variety of text analysis methods, we find that partisanship and ideology decisively structure whether or not parties prioritize RWE. Despite the clear prevalence of RWE when compared to LWE, center-right parties continue to devote disproportionate attention to left-wing extremism. Even more disconcerting, these partisan biases extend to purportedly neutral state institutions, hampering their battle against extremism along the way. The politicization of the *Verfassungsschutz* and the police challenges these institutions' legitimacy, undermining their ability to credibly warn the public about the dangers of extremism and prevent its spread.

Building on supply-side theories of the Far Right but adopting a wider lens, we demonstrate that partisan ideology persistently shapes the environment in which political extremism occurs. Some have interpreted similar biases as a result of the state being structurally white supremacist, with persistent institutionalized power relationships that reflect this racial ordering (Meier 2020). Our results suggest that this racialized framework depends on partisanship, but scholars can dig deeper by juxtaposing other types of extremism. For example,

in exploratory analyses we found that the coverage of Islamist extremism in *Verfassungss-chutz* reports does not consistently vary by partisanship, suggesting that both the Left and the Right can unite behind a foreign, nonwhite threat.[33]

Furthermore, our evidence reveals long-run biases across multiple types of state and party actors, but it does not speak to the inner workings of these institutions. Future work can examine whether intelligence officers produce biased reports because they themselves share the ideological predispositions of interior ministers or because they are pressured to toe the party line. Similar research should be carried out with respect to the police.

Given that the rise of right-wing extremism is a global problem, researchers can apply our framework to other countries while being mindful of institutional differences. These differences may relate to relationships between intelligence and law enforcement agencies on the one hand and political parties on the other. It would be critical to know, for instance, whether intelligence offices whose leadership is less tied to parliamentary politics approach extremism in less biased ways or how authoritarian legacies influence the public's and the state's stance towards different types of extremist ideologies (cf., Dinas and Northmore-Ball 2020; Neundorf and Pop-Eleches 2020). Answers to such questions would in turn help us understand how the systematic, long-run biases we document can be broken.

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[33]For a comparison of public debates about far-right and Islamist terrorist attacks in the media, see Voelker (2023). See also Búzás and Meier (2023).

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Online Appendix
Structures of Bias:
How the State Systematically Downplays Right-Wing Extremism

This Appendix includes the following information:

A   Keyword List

To measure how political parties discuss political extremism, we devised a list of keywords. These include terms such as "right-wing extreme" and "left-wing extreme", "right-wing radical" and "left-wing radical", "right-wing terror" and "left-wing terror", but also specific terms referring to parties, movements, organizations, events, ideas, and other concepts (the full list of keywords in German and English appears below). In creating the keyword list, our goal was to be as comprehensive as possible. In an iterative process, we therefore updated the initial list of terms multiple times based on our research of the case and our careful reading of a sample of the documents analyzed in the paper.

So as to not only rely on this keyword list, we implemented a number of additional approaches across the different parts of our empirical analysis. First, we show that the results are largely robust to a more restricted set of generic keywords that do not connote specific movements, events, parties, or groups.[1] The terms included in this restricted list are highlighted in bold below. Second, for the intelligence reports, we use three different dependent variables (chapter length, topic of first chapter, topic proportions from STM) that all produce results similar to the keyword analysis. Third, when examining party behavior, we complement the keyword analysis of the speeches and the manifestos with the analysis of parliamentary inquiries, which were hand-coded into extremism type by research assistants.[2]

We also implemented a validity coding exercise using the parliamentary speeches. We discuss it in further detail in Appendix B.

German

- **RWE keyword list: "rechtsextrem"**, **"rechtsradikal"**, **"rechtsterror"**, **"rechts-gerichtet"**, **"rechtsmotiviert"**, **"rechtsideolog"**, "pmk-rechts", "nationalsoz", "identitär", "böhnhardt", "mundlos", "zschäpe", "skinhead", "pegida", "legida", "republikaner", "aryans", "hammerskins", "wiking", "NSU", "DVU", "DSU", "JN", "NPD", "FVB", "PRO-", "REP", "Nazi", 'hannibal', "prepper", "lübcke", "reichsbürger", "rassis", "flüchtlingsfeind", "ausländerfeind", "fremdenfeind", "volksverhetz", "antisemit", "islamfeind", "antimuslim"

- **LWE keywords: "linksextrem"**, **"linksradikal"**, **"linksterror"**, **"linksgerichtet"**, **"linksmotiviert"**, **"linksideolog"**, "pmk-links", "g20", "g7", "g8", "rigaer", "hausbesetz", "connewitz", "blockupy", "indymedia", "antideutsch", "antiimp", "antifa", "anti-akw", "anti-atom", "ende-gelände", "kommunist", "marxist", "RAF", "EZB-", "DKP", "KPD", "PDS", "MLPD", "Autonome", "Punks", "Flora"

English

- **RWE keywords: "right-wing extrem"**, **"right-wing radical"**, **"right-wing terror"**, **"right-wing orient"**, **"right-wing motiv"**, **"right-wing ideolog"**, "pmc-right",

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[1] See Table B.7, Table B.8, Table D.5, and Table E.3.

[2] To help RAs identify the type of extremism, we provided them with a list of exemplary keywords that signal RWE and LWE. These were: "Neo-nazi", "NSU", "identitarian", "xenophob/racist", "NPD", "Reich citizens" for RWE, and "G20", "G8", "blockupy", "Antifa" for LWE.

"national social", "identitarian", "boehnhardt", "mundlos", "zschaepe", "skinhead", "pegida", "legida", "the republicans", "aryans", "hammerskins", "wiking", "NSU", "DVU", "DSU", "JN", "NPD", "FVB", "PRO-", "REP", "Nazi", "hannibal", "prepper", "luebcke", "Reich citizens", "racis", "anti-refugee", "anti-foreigner", "xenophob", "hate speech", "antisemit", "islamophob", "anti-muslim",

- **LWE keywords: "left-wing extrem"**, **"left-wing radical"**, **"left-wing terror"**, **"left-wing orient"**, **"left-wing motiv"**, **"left-wing ideolog"**, "pmc-left", "g20", "g7", "g8", "rigaer", "squatters", "connewitz", "blockupy", "indymedia", "anti-german", "anti-imp", "antifa", "anti-nuke", "anti-atom", "ende-gelände", "communist", "marxist", "RAF", "EZB-", "DKP", "KPD", "PDS", "MLPD", "Autonomists", "Punks", "Flora"

B Speeches and Manifestos: Additional Figures and Tables

This section of the Appendix provides additional descriptive statistics, figures, and regression tables related to our analysis of speeches and manifestos in the main manuscript.

More specifically, Tables B.1 and B.2 provide descriptive statistics for our keyword and bias analysis of the speeches (B.1) and manifesto (B.2) data, respectively. Each table shows the descriptive statistics for all parties, but also broken down by each party separately. Figure B.1 complements Figure 2 in the main text by aggregating the logged ratio (position) measure to center-left vs center-right parties.

In our main analysis, we follow conventional practises in the Manifesto literature by using the Lowe et al. (2011) approach of computing log odds of right-wing and left-wing keywords. Among other things, this measure implies that the marginal effect of each count decreases in the amount of already counted words. To make sure that this approach does not drive our findings, we repeat our main analysis using the simple difference of RWE and LWE keywords (for the *Position* measure) and additionally account for the normalized difference between RWE and LWE crimes for the *Bias* measure. The results in Tables B.3 and B.4 show that our main findings are not affected by this decision.

The analyses in Tables B.5 and B.6 tests whether our results might be affected by mainstream parties adopting positions of far-right parties to win back issue ownership in an attempt to decrease these parties' electoral appeal. We do so by repeating our main analyses while interacting the different party/partisan variables with a *Far-Right Polling* variable – which captures the average vote intention for all far-right parties in a given state (or at the federal level) and year – allowing the effect of far-right party popularity to vary by party. No consistent patterns emerge. Most coefficient estimates for *Far-Right Polling* and its interactions are statistically insignificant. Moreover, while some estimates reach conventional levels of significance, the signs of the coefficients often change and depend on the exact model specification and choice of fixed effects.

In creating the keyword list, our goal was to be as comprehensive as possible. In Tables B.7 and B.8 we show that the results are robust to a more restricted set of generic keywords that do not connote specific movements, events, parties, or groups and as such exclude time-sensitive terms from the list. See Appendix A for more details.

The bias measure in our main analysis relies on the incidence of right-wing and left-wing extremist crime in Germany. While this indicator in itself is already a subgroup of all politically motivated crimes, its definition still allows for a relatively wide variety of crimes to be included. In order to further take into account crime severity (which should also reduce measurement error if we assume that severe crimes are more likely to be reported accurately than less severe ones), we replicate our main analysis by replacing the incidence of right-wing and left-wing extremist crime with the incidence of *violent* right-wing and left-wing extremist crime (this includes killings, attempted killings, and physical assaults). In other words, the bias measure now becomes: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}$. The distribution of violent right-wing and left-wing extremist crime over time is presented in Figure D.1 while Tables B.9 and B.10 show that the results of our main analysis are robust to using the violent crime measure. Since the violent crime measure has a relatively

large share of missingness (especially in early years and at the subnational/state level), we impute missing values at the state level with the corresponding values at the federal level where possible. However, the results are also robust to only using data from the last 20 years, where there is much less missingness (Tables B.11 and B.12). Moreover, the manifesto analysis is also robust to only using non-imputed data as well as only using federal-level data.

To account for the fact that party strategies and MP behavior might change in election years, Table B.13 repeats our main analysis of speeches while interacting the different party/partisan variables with an *Election Year* dummy variable. All interaction coefficient estimates are statistically insignificant and our main results are robust to their inclusion.

Finally, we also examine the validity of our keyword-based analysis and the resulting logged keyword ratios. In terms of face validity, it is encouraging that the MP using the most RWE keywords is Ulla Jelpke (former speaker of the *Anticapitalist Left* group within the Left party). Franz-Josef Strauß (former CSU chairman who was famous for his conservative and anti-left stances), in turn, uses the most LWE keywords. To more systematically investigate the validity of our measure, we conducted a coding exercise to determine whether our keyword-based analysis and the resulting logged keyword ratios do indeed measure what we want them to measure. More specifically, we had two coders analyze a random sample of 80 speeches. We randomly chose 15 speeches that made heavy use of RWE keywords (at least 12), 15 speeches that made heavy use of LWE keywords (at least 12), and 50 speeches that made use of both types of keywords (at least 3 RWE and at least 3 LWE keywords). The coders were German native speakers and were not familiar with our keyword list so as to not influence their coding. For each of the 80 speeches, we asked the coders to determine whether the speech 1) states that LWE/RWE is a significant problem (*LWE/RWE Problem*); 2) highlights the problem of LWE/RWE more so than the problem of RWE/LWE (*LWE/RWE more*); and 3) highlights the problem of LWE and RWE equally (*LWE RWE equal*). The results of this coding exercise can be found in Table B.14 and Figure B.2.

Table B.14 shows how often no, one, or both coders agreed that a given speech reflected one of the three categories. For the speeches with a clear RWE or LWE emphasis, we find that the coders consistently identified these speeches as highlighting the respective type of extremism as a problem, as more of a problem than the other type, and as not equating the two types of extremism. For speeches that use both types of keywords, the coders clearly identified that both types of extremism are highlighted as problems. Which one is more problematic or whether they are equally problematic, varies from speech to speech. This is where Figure B.2 provides some more information. Here we plot the average agreement for each category (0=no coder agrees, 0.5=one coder agrees, 1=both coders agree) along the y-axis and the logged keyword ratio for each corresponding speech along the x-axis. Across the different panels we can clearly see that speeches with a heavier emphasis on RWE (LWE) are consistently identified as highlighting RWE (LWE) as a problem, and as more of a problem than LWE (RWE). For the *LWE RWE equal* category, we can observe that the coders were most likely to use it for speeches with logged keyword ratios close to 0 (i.e., a similar amount of RWE and LWE keywords), whereas they were unlikely to agree that both types were discussed in similar terms as speeches become more one-sided. In sum, this coding exercise provides good support for the validity of our keyword approach.

Figure B.1: Keyword Ratio in Speeches and Manifestos

(a) Parliamentary speeches (1949-2020)
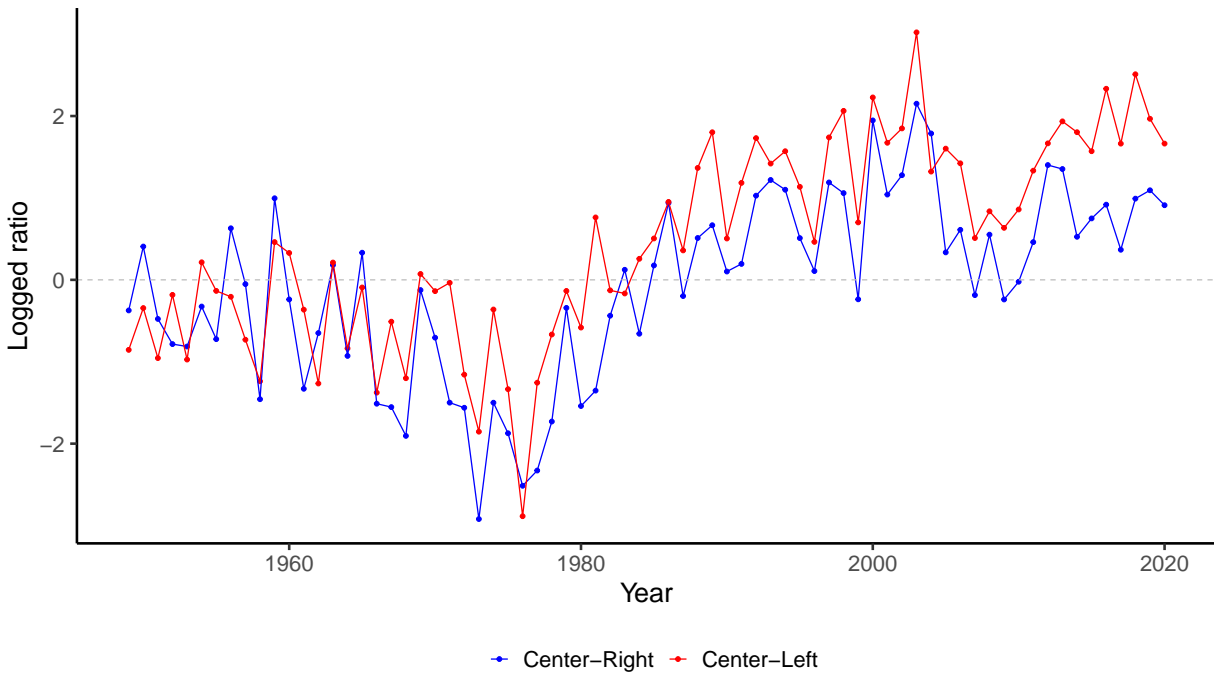
(b) State and federal level manifestos (1975-2017)
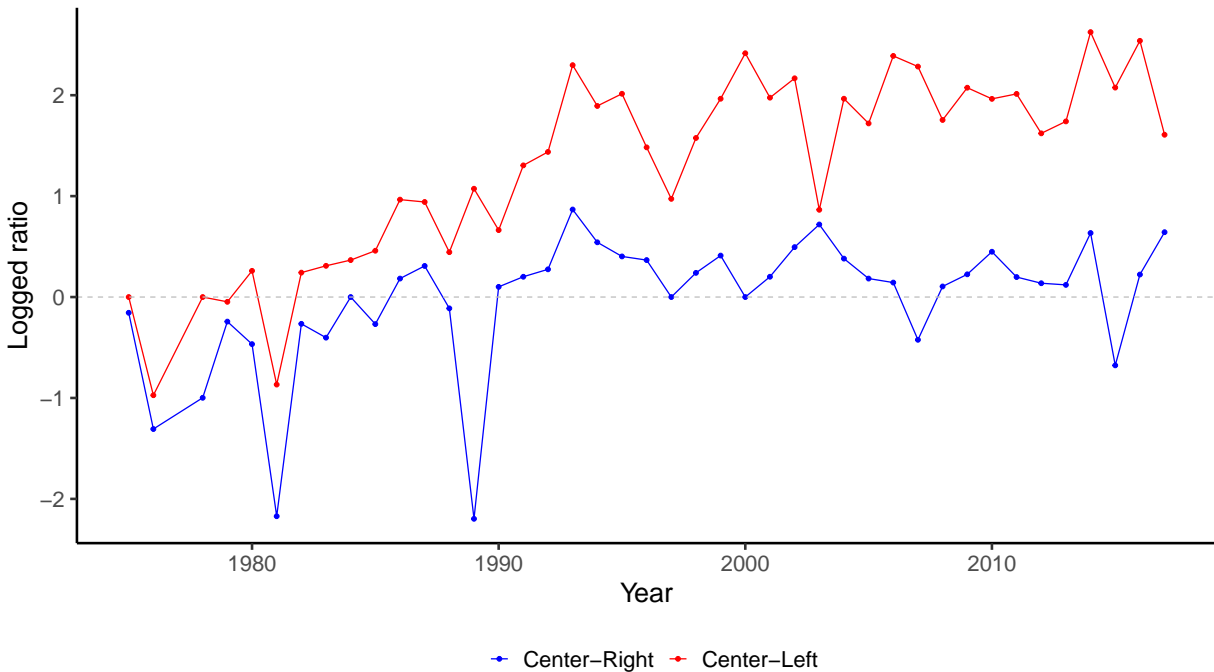
Note: Plots depict party emphasis on left-wing vs. right-wing extremism in speeches and manifestos according to the logged ration scaling proposed by Lowe et al. (2011). CDU/CSU and FDP are coded as center-right; SPD, Greens, and Left Party as center-left. Plots broken down by party can be found in Figure 2.

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Table B.1: Speeches: Descriptive Statistics

	N (Party-years)	Mean	SD	Min	Max
All parties					
RWE Keywords	284	69.54	63.92	0	332
LWE Keywords	284	42.85	49.22	0	354
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	284	0.40	1.28	-3.50	3.70
Logged Crime Ratio	206	0.98	1.13	-2.27	2.26
Bias	206	-0.24	0.95	-2.77	2.15
CDU/CSU					
RWE Keywords	72	67.93	59.85	2	265
LWE Keywords	72	81.93	71.25	7	354
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	72	-0.27	1.03	-2.49	1.59
Logged Crime Ratio	47	0.78	1.26	-2.27	2.26
Bias	47	-0.80	0.82	-2.77	1.37
SPD					
RWE Keywords	72	80.38	75.41	5	332
LWE Keywords	72	42.67	26.04	7	123
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	72	0.34	1.17	-2.89	2.66
Logged Crime Ratio	47	0.78	1.26	-2.27	2.26
Bias	47	-0.01	0.92	-2.62	1.91
FDP					
RWE Keywords	69	27.41	31.11	0	139
LWE Keywords	69	17.20	13.53	1	78
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	69	0.10	1.35	-3.50	2.87
Logged Crime Ratio	44	0.74	1.29	-2.27	2.26
Bias	44	-0.29	0.96	-2.31	2.08
Greens					
RWE Keywords	38	89.37	52.35	15	230
LWE Keywords	38	17.18	9.55	2	46
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	38	1.62	0.86	-0.25	3.70
Logged Crime Ratio	37	1.30	0.75	-0.56	2.26
Bias	37	0.30	0.94	-1.60	2.15
Left					
RWE Keywords	29	117.03	60.86	3	231
LWE Keywords	29	27.52	15.82	0	68
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	29	1.42	0.55	0.20	2.43
Logged Crime Ratio	28	1.57	0.40	0.60	2.26
Bias	28	-0.16	0.70	-1.66	0.99
AfD					
RWE Keywords	4	97.25	64.97	6	158
LWE Keywords	4	139.75	99.07	7	228
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	4	-0.30	0.34	-0.79	-0.01
Logged Crime Ratio	3	1.25	0.17	1.11	1.43
Bias	3	-1.38	0.11	-1.44	-1.26

Table B.2: Manifestos: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
All parties					
RWE Keywords	700	5.32	8.34	0	59
LWE Keywords	700	1.14	2.22	0	17
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	700	0.86	1.37	-2.94	4.20
Logged Crime Ratio	555	1.28	0.91	-1.78	3.24
Bias	555	-0.28	1.44	-4.56	3.54
CDU/CSU					
RWE Keywords	159	1.21	1.97	0	13
LWE Keywords	159	1.16	2.02	0	11
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	159	0.07	1.05	-2.94	2.56
Logged Crime Ratio	122	1.21	0.96	-1.78	3.24
Bias	122	-1.08	1.13	-3.30	2.05
SPD					
RWE Keywords	160	5.41	6.85	0	31
LWE Keywords	160	0.41	1.06	0	9
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	160	1.40	1.42	-1.95	3.97
Logged Crime Ratio	121	1.22	0.96	-1.78	3.24
Bias	121	0.50	1.33	-3.28	3.23
FDP					
RWE Keywords	151	0.91	2.05	0	15
LWE Keywords	151	0.52	1.27	0	10
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	151	0.17	0.81	-1.95	2.83
Logged Crime Ratio	117	1.25	0.96	-1.78	3.24
Bias	117	-1.03	1.13	-3.40	1.86
Greens					
RWE Keywords	140	11.29	10.99	0	59
LWE Keywords	140	1.36	2.34	0	12
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	140	1.83	1.36	-2.20	4.20
Logged Crime Ratio	116	1.30	0.87	-0.67	3.24
Bias	116	0.64	1.30	-4.56	3.54
Left					
RWE Keywords	74	12.45	10.77	0	54
LWE Keywords	74	3.28	3.55	0	17
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	74	1.19	1.04	-1.10	4.17
Logged Crime Ratio	64	1.54	0.68	-0.52	3.24
Bias	64	-0.28	1.12	-3.00	2.90
AfD					
RWE Keywords	16	1.69	2.65	0	9
LWE Keywords	16	2.12	3.52	0	13
Position (Logged Keyword Ratio)	16	-0.16	0.87	-1.61	1.61
Logged Crime Ratio	15	1.32	0.72	0.29	3.08
Bias	15	-1.49	1.15	-4.18	0.50

Table B.3: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties, No Logged Ratio

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | |
| | Position | | | Bias | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AfD	−28.50	−116.88**	−128.70**	−1.43**	−1.22**	−1.29**
	(35.03)	(26.39)	(22.55)	(0.52)	(0.43)	(0.33)
FDP	24.20*	28.08**	28.14**	0.33	0.32*	0.30**
	(11.49)	(8.31)	(6.81)	(0.18)	(0.15)	(0.11)
Greens	86.18**	47.61**	44.77**	0.57**	0.62**	0.61**
	(13.67)	(10.32)	(8.49)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.11)
Left	103.52**	52.53**	52.65**	0.45*	0.67**	0.71**
	(15.00)	(11.47)	(9.43)	(0.21)	(0.18)	(0.13)
SPD	51.71**	51.71**	51.71**	0.85**	0.85**	0.85**
	(11.37)	(8.21)	(6.72)	(0.18)	(0.15)	(0.10)
Constant	−14.00	−36.60	−36.61	−1.10**	−0.32	−0.31
	(8.04)	(28.84)	(23.59)	(0.13)	(0.42)	(0.30)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	284	284	284	206	206	206
Adjusted R^2	0.20	0.58	0.72	0.14	0.43	0.71

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the difference between right-wing and left-wing keywords (# RWE keywords − # LWE keywords). *Bias* takes into account the (normalized) number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\frac{\text{\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords}}{\text{sd(\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords)}} - \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime}}{\text{sd(\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime)}}$. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. Party-years are the unit of observation. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.4: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties, No Logged Ratio

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | | | |
| | Position | | | | Bias | | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
AfD	−0.48	−0.75	−5.14**	−5.78**	−1.00**	−0.88**	−0.82**	−0.69*
	(1.76)	(1.74)	(1.68)	(1.73)	(0.31)	(0.27)	(0.28)	(0.27)
FDP	0.34	0.30	0.13	0.11	0.004	−0.01	0.01	−0.01
	(0.76)	(0.75)	(0.70)	(0.70)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Greens	9.88**	9.93**	9.54**	9.54**	1.30**	1.30**	1.31**	1.31**
	(0.78)	(0.77)	(0.72)	(0.72)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.12)
Left	9.12**	8.70**	6.92**	6.87**	0.93**	0.93**	0.99**	0.99**
	(0.95)	(0.95)	(0.89)	(0.90)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.15)
SPD	4.95**	4.94**	4.94**	4.94**	0.75**	0.75**	0.75**	0.75**
	(0.75)	(0.74)	(0.69)	(0.69)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Constant	0.04	−2.13	−4.93**	−4.19*	−0.68**	−0.43*	−0.21	−0.10
	(0.53)	(1.12)	(1.35)	(1.93)	(0.10)	(0.18)	(0.36)	(0.61)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	700	700	700	700	555	555	555	555
Adjusted R^2	0.27	0.29	0.39	0.39	0.20	0.40	0.41	0.47

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the difference between right-wing and left-wing keywords (# RWE keywords − # LWE keywords). *Bias* takes into account the (normalized) number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\frac{\text{\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords}}{\text{sd(\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords)}} - \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime}}{\text{sd(\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime)}}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed using the ratio at the federal level, where possible. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.5: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties and Far-Right Polling

	Outcome variable:					
	Position			Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AfD	−0.43	−0.79	0.53	0.12	0.19	0.53
	(3.48)	(2.92)	(2.14)	(3.30)	(2.91)	(2.14)
FDP	0.68**	0.69**	0.70**	0.76**	0.74**	0.75**
	(0.24)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.22)	(0.15)
Greens	1.50**	1.24**	1.14**	1.12**	1.19**	1.14**
	(0.25)	(0.21)	(0.14)	(0.25)	(0.22)	(0.15)
Left	1.25**	0.78**	0.82**	0.40	0.76**	0.82**
	(0.29)	(0.25)	(0.17)	(0.28)	(0.25)	(0.17)
SPD	0.76**	0.76**	0.76**	0.72**	0.72**	0.72**
	(0.24)	(0.20)	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.21)	(0.14)
Far-Right Polling	0.14**	0.08*	0.39**	0.04	0.07	0.03
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
AfD	−0.08	−0.03	−0.15	−0.09	−0.12	−0.15
× Far-Right Polling	(0.38)	(0.31)	(0.23)	(0.36)	(0.31)	(0.23)
FDP	−0.03	−0.03	−0.04	−0.05	−0.04	−0.05
× Far-Right Polling	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)
Greens	−0.02	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.03
× Far-Right Polling	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Left	−0.02	0.05	0.05	0.11	0.06	0.05
× Far-Right Polling	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)
SPD	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04
× Far-Right Polling	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Constant	−0.21	−1.72**	−2.67**	−1.04**	−0.37*	−0.69*
	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.30)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.30)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	194	194	194	182	182	182
Adjusted R^2	0.36	0.55	0.80	0.25	0.42	0.74

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The *Position* outcome variable is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords (following Lowe et al. (2011)): $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. The *Bias* outcome variable also takes into account the reported number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is excluded as the reference category. Far-Right Polling measures vote intention (%) for far-right parties in a given year and state based on Politbarometer data from 1977 to 2019. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.6: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties and Far-Right Polling

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
AfD	−0.68	−0.59	−1.08	−0.73	0.26	0.04	−0.09	−0.39
	(0.77)	(0.77)	(0.74)	(0.77)	(0.84)	(0.83)	(0.82)	(0.82)
FDP	0.12	0.11	0.06	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.07	0.01
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Greens	1.56**	1.55**	1.48**	1.47**	1.61**	1.61**	1.62**	1.61**
	(0.17)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Left	0.86**	0.72**	0.43*	0.44*	0.51*	0.52*	0.61*	0.58*
	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.24)	(0.23)
SPD	1.14**	1.14**	1.14**	1.13**	1.36**	1.36**	1.37**	1.36**
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.18)
Far-Right Polling	0.06	0.05	−0.01	−0.04	−0.03	−0.01	−0.03	−0.03
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.09)
AfD	0.003	−0.01	0.06	0.02	−0.07	−0.05	−0.05	−0.01
× Far-Right Polling	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)
FDP	−0.06	−0.05	−0.05	−0.04	−0.03	−0.03	−0.04	−0.02
× Far-Right Polling	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Greens	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05
× Far-Right Polling	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Left	0.04	0.05	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.09	0.09
× Far-Right Polling	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
SPD	0.12*	0.12*	0.12*	0.12*	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10
× Far-Right Polling	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Constant	0.07	−0.50*	−1.18**	−1.72**	−1.02**	−1.28**	−0.86**	−2.77**
	(0.12)	(0.21)	(0.31)	(0.42)	(0.14)	(0.24)	(0.26)	(0.48)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	662	662	662	662	539	539	539	539
Adjusted R^2	0.32	0.35	0.40	0.41	0.30	0.34	0.36	0.43

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The *Position* outcome variable is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords (following Lowe et al. (2011)): $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. The Bias outcome variable also takes into account the reported number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed by using the ratio at the federal level if possible. CDU/CSU is excluded as the reference category. Far-Right Polling measures vote intention (%) for far-right parties in a given year and state based on Politbarometer data from 1977 to 2019. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.7: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties – Restricted Set of Keywords

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | |
| | Position | | | Bias | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AfD	−1.71*	−2.43**	−2.22**	−2.51**	−2.32**	−2.16**
	(0.67)	(0.55)	(0.44)	(0.68)	(0.66)	(0.53)
FDP	0.42	0.45**	0.47**	0.59*	0.58*	0.60**
	(0.22)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.24)	(0.23)	(0.17)
Greens	1.99**	1.27**	1.27**	1.20**	1.35**	1.38**
	(0.26)	(0.21)	(0.17)	(0.25)	(0.24)	(0.18)
Left	2.03**	1.01**	1.03**	0.97**	1.11**	1.12**
	(0.29)	(0.24)	(0.18)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.20)
SPD	1.04**	1.04**	1.04**	1.28**	1.28**	1.28**
	(0.22)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.17)
Constant	0.52**	0.24	0.23	−0.0001	2.21**	2.20**
	(0.15)	(0.60)	(0.46)	(0.17)	(0.64)	(0.48)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	284	284	284	206	206	206
Adjusted R^2	0.26	0.55	0.73	0.22	0.29	0.60

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The *Position* outcome variable is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords (following Lowe et al. (2011)): $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5}$. The Bias outcome variable also takes into account the reported number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime } + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is excluded as the reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.8: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties – Restricted Set of Keywords

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | | | |
| | Position | | | | Bias | | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
AfD	−0.15	−0.19	−0.61*	−0.58*	−0.23	−0.17	−0.38	−0.43
	(0.26)	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.25)	(0.32)	(0.30)	(0.30)	(0.29)
FDP	0.01	−0.002	−0.03	−0.03	0.01	0.01	0.03	−0.001
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Greens	1.51**	1.50**	1.44**	1.45**	1.57**	1.58**	1.63**	1.62**
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Left	1.35**	1.27**	1.03**	1.02**	1.12**	1.20**	1.23**	1.18**
	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.16)
SPD	1.06**	1.05**	1.06**	1.06**	1.31**	1.31**	1.31**	1.31**
	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.13)
Constant	0.10	0.06	−0.34	−0.20	−1.14**	−0.79**	1.02**	1.87**
	(0.08)	(0.16)	(0.20)	(0.28)	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.39)	(0.66)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	700	700	700	700	555	555	555	555
Adjusted R^2	0.31	0.32	0.41	0.42	0.26	0.32	0.39	0.46

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The *Position* outcome variable is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords (following Lowe et al. (2011)): $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5}$. The Bias outcome variable also takes into account the reported number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE keywords } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE keywords } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Crime } + 0.5}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed by using the ratio at the federal level if possible. CDU/CSU is excluded as the reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.9: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties – Violent Crimes Only

	Outcome variable: Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AfD	−0.78	−1.18*	−0.98**
	(0.68)	(0.54)	(0.31)
FDP	0.51*	0.54**	0.55**
	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.10)
Greens	1.05**	1.24**	1.19**
	(0.25)	(0.20)	(0.11)
Left	0.53	0.90**	0.94**
	(0.27)	(0.22)	(0.12)
SPD	0.81**	0.81**	0.81**
	(0.24)	(0.18)	(0.10)
Constant	−0.13	0.72**	0.01
	(0.17)	(0.23)	(0.29)
Year FEs			✓
Decade FEs		✓	
Observations	203	203	203
Adjusted R^2	0.09	0.46	0.83

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.10: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties – Violent Crimes Only

	Outcome variable: Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
AfD	−0.32	−0.19	−0.67*	−0.65*
	(0.38)	(0.36)	(0.32)	(0.30)
FDP	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07
	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.15)
Greens	1.78**	1.80**	1.86**	1.87**
	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.15)
Left	0.97**	0.92**	0.90**	0.87**
	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.17)
SPD	1.57**	1.57**	1.58**	1.57**
	(0.20)	(0.19)	(0.16)	(0.15)
Constant	−0.43**	−0.86**	2.02**	3.83**
	(0.14)	(0.25)	(0.53)	(0.72)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	484	484	484	484
Adjusted R^2	0.23	0.32	0.50	0.57

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed using the ratio at the federal level, where possible. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.11: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties – Violent Crimes 2000-2020 Only

	Outcome variable: Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
AfD	−0.86	−1.20**	−0.98**
	(0.44)	(0.40)	(0.33)
FDP	0.42	0.48*	0.52**
	(0.24)	(0.21)	(0.17)
Greens	1.17**	1.17**	1.17**
	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.16)
Left	0.85**	0.81**	0.89**
	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.16)
SPD	0.93**	0.93**	0.93**
	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.16)
Constant	−0.05	−0.39*	0.20
	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.25)
Year FEs			✓
Decade FEs		✓	
Observations	98	98	98
Adjusted R^2	0.30	0.45	0.66

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. Only using data from 2000-2020. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.12: Regression of Keywords in Manifestos on Parties – Violent Crimes 2000-2017 Only

	Outcome variable: Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
AfD	−0.31	−0.27	−0.67*	−0.57
	(0.34)	(0.31)	(0.30)	(0.30)
FDP	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Greens	2.06**	2.06**	2.06**	2.06**
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Left	1.26**	1.17**	1.09**	1.05**
	(0.23)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.19)
SPD	1.86**	1.86**	1.86**	1.86**
	(0.22)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Constant	−0.44**	−0.95**	−1.35**	−1.29
	(0.15)	(0.28)	(0.27)	(0.67)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	319	319	319	319
Adjusted R^2	0.36	0.49	0.54	0.57

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the state-level crime numbers are imputed using the ratio at the federal level, where possible. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. Only using data from 2000-2017. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Table B.13: Regression of Keywords in Speeches on Parties – Election Year Interactions

	Outcome variable:					
	Position			Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
AfD	−0.07	−1.10*	−1.33**	−0.61	−0.80	−1.17**
	(0.66)	(0.48)	(0.34)	(0.65)	(0.57)	(0.39)
FDP	0.42	0.49**	0.49**	0.53*	0.54**	0.56**
	(0.22)	(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.12)
Greens	1.96**	1.22**	1.16**	1.15**	1.23**	1.21**
	(0.26)	(0.19)	(0.13)	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.13)
Left	1.70**	0.79**	0.88**	0.65*	0.84**	0.95**
	(0.28)	(0.21)	(0.15)	(0.25)	(0.22)	(0.14)
SPD	0.68**	0.68**	0.68**	0.84**	0.84**	0.84**
	(0.21)	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.12)
Election Year	−0.001	−0.02	−1.45**	0.12	0.05	1.31**
	(0.30)	(0.21)	(0.40)	(0.29)	(0.26)	(0.38)
AfD	0.20	0.17	0.52	0.06	0.14	0.49
× Election Year	(1.31)	(0.92)	(0.69)	(1.13)	(0.98)	(0.67)
FDP	−0.16	−0.22	−0.23	−0.08	−0.10	−0.11
× Election Year	(0.42)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.23)
Greens	−0.25	−0.19	−0.20	−0.21	−0.09	−0.12
× Election Year	(0.50)	(0.35)	(0.25)	(0.44)	(0.38)	(0.25)
Left	−0.02	0.03	−0.16	−0.04	0.14	−0.10
× Election Year	(0.55)	(0.38)	(0.28)	(0.47)	(0.41)	(0.27)
SPD	−0.26	−0.26	−0.26	−0.21	−0.21	−0.21
× Election Year	(0.42)	(0.29)	(0.20)	(0.41)	(0.36)	(0.23)
Constant	−0.27	−0.74	0.69**	−0.83**	0.98*	−0.28
	(0.15)	(0.47)	(0.23)	(0.15)	(0.49)	(0.22)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	284	284	284	206	206	206
Adjusted R^2	0.25	0.63	0.83	0.13	0.34	0.74

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the logged odds ratio of right-wing and left-wing keywords: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. *Bias* takes into account the number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. CDU/CSU is the excluded reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01

Figure B.2: Validity Check of Keyword Analysis in Speeches: Graphical Display
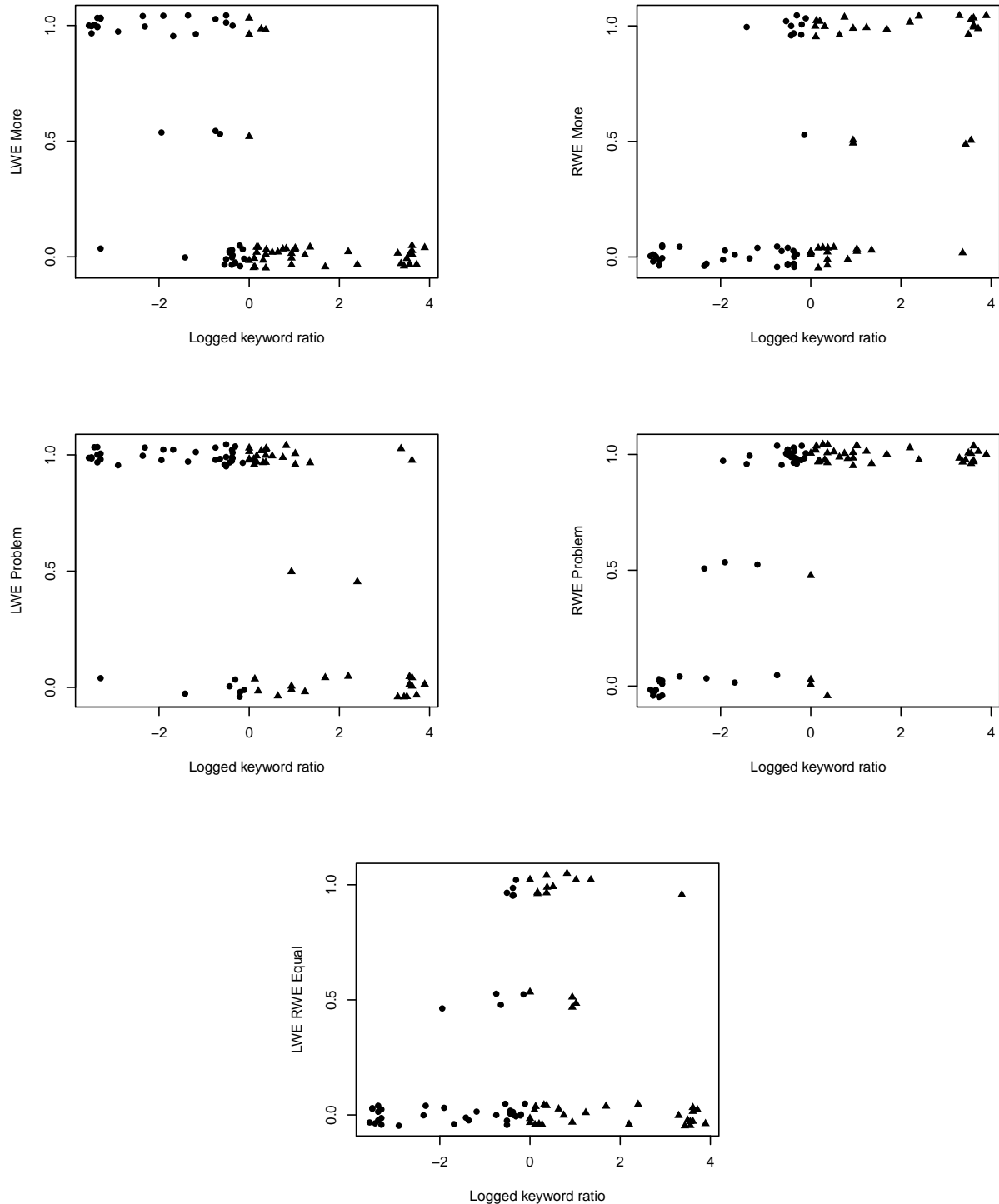
Note: Plots depict the average agreement across our two coders for the five items described on the y-axis while also plotting the speeches' logged keyword ratios along the x-axis. Circles indicate speeches with a negative keyword ratio (i.e., emphasis on LWE); triangles indicate speeches with a positive keyword ratio (i.e., emphasis on RWE). Values are slightly jittered along the y-axis for better readability. N=80.

Table B.14: Validity Check of Keyword Analysis in Speeches

	none agrees	one agrees	both agree
RWE emphasis speeches (N=16)			
RWE problem	0	0	16
RWE more	2	2	12
RWE LWE equal	14	0	2
LWE emphasis speeches (N=19)			
LWE problem	2	0	17
LWE more	2	1	16
RWE LWE equal	18	1	0
Mixed emphasis speeches (N=50)			
RWE problem	5	2	43
RWE more	30	3	17
LWE problem	11	1	38
LWE more	35	4	11
RWE LWE equal	28	8	14

Note: Speeches are classified as RWE or LWE emphasis speeches when they contain at least 12 keywords from the respective category. Speeches are classified as mixed when they contain at least 3 keywords of both categories. Since these definitions are not mutually exclusive, a speech can be classified as more than one type in this table. This explains the small difference between the overall speeches coded (N=80) and the number of observations in this table (N=85).

C   Parliamentary Inquiries: Additional Figures and Tables

Figure C.1 shows the distribution of parliamentary inquiries in our sample by jurisdiction and year.

   Figure C.2 shows the distribution of types of extremism referenced in parliamentary inquiries by decade, separately for each party except the AfD, which was only founded in 2013.

   Table C.1 and Table C.2 show that party differences largely remain when accounting for far-right party popularity and election years. While the CDU-SPD difference does become smaller when the far-right polls higher and in election years, this finding does not replicate in the other data sources (see Table B.5, Table B.6, Table B.13, Table D.7, Table D.8, Table D.11, and Table D.12).

Figure C.1: Distribution of Inquiries on Extremism by Jurisdiction and Year
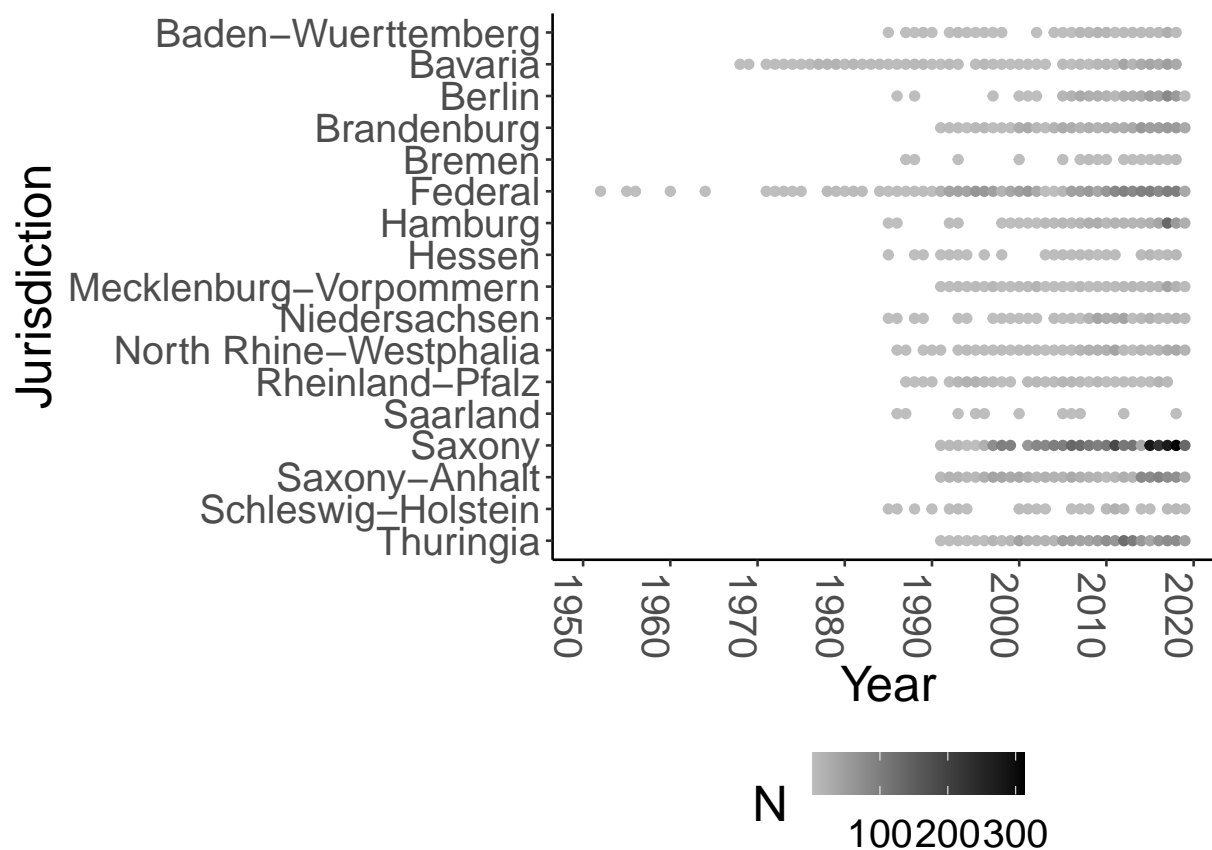
Figure C.2: Distribution of Types of Extremism Referenced in Parliamentary Inquiries by Party and Decade
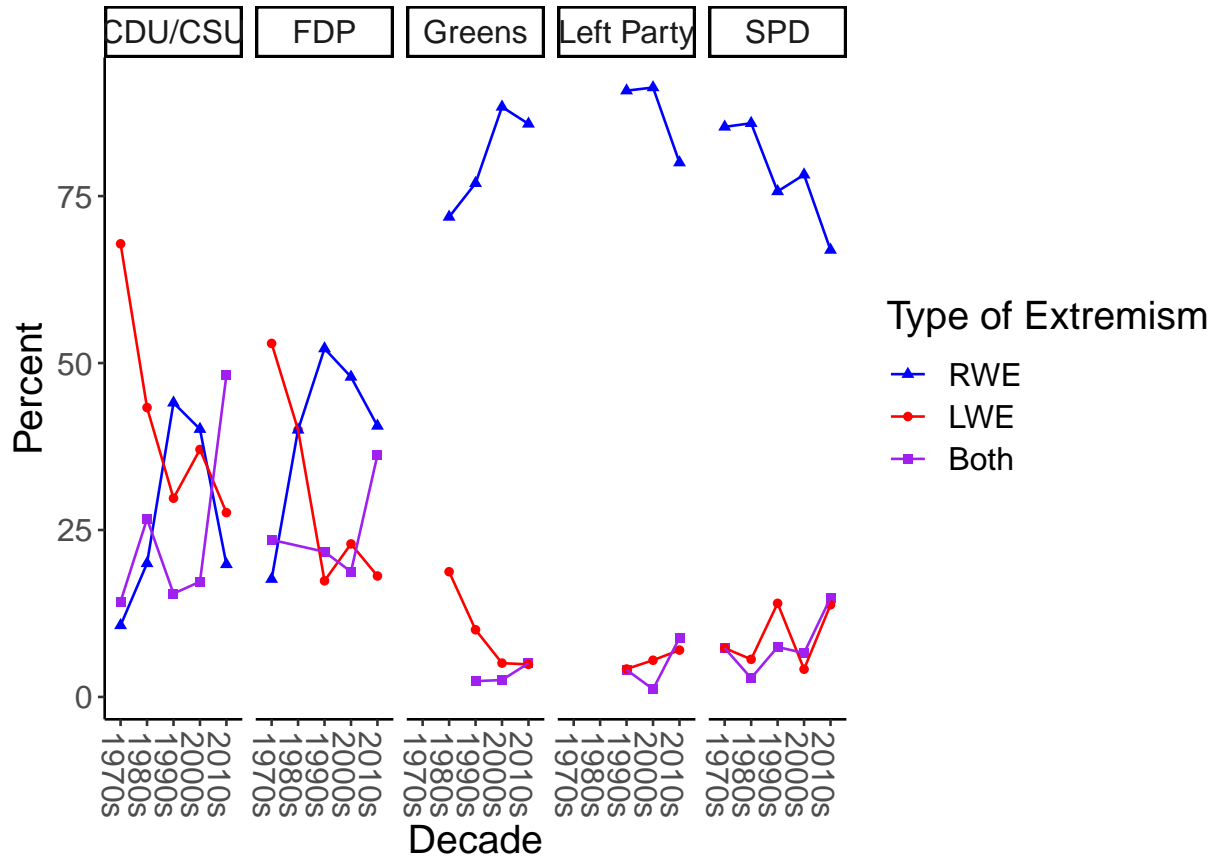
Note: The category 'unclear' is excluded to increase readability. Inquiries from before the 1970s were excluded due to the low number of observations in those decades.

Table C.1: Regression of Extremism Type Referenced in Parliamentary Inquiry on Parties and Far-Right Polling

	Outcome variable: Type of Extremism			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
AfD	−0.49***	−0.29***	−0.27***	−0.14
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
FDP	0.23***	0.18**	0.19**	0.19**
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Greens	0.92***	0.90***	0.89***	0.88***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Left	0.96***	0.92***	0.91***	0.91***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
SPD	0.93***	0.90***	0.90***	0.90***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Far-Right Polling	0.02**	0.01*	0.02**	0.03***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
AfD	−0.001	−0.01	−0.01	−0.02**
× Far-Right Polling	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
FDP	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02
× Far-Right Polling	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Greens	−0.01*	−0.01	−0.01	−0.01
× Far-Right Polling	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Left	−0.03***	−0.02***	−0.02***	−0.02***
× Far-Right Polling	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
SPD	−0.06***	−0.06***	−0.06***	−0.06***
× Far-Right Polling	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Constant	0.90***	1.07***	0.89***	0.63***
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	9,583	9,583	9,583	9,583
Adjusted R^2	0.29	0.31	0.31	0.32

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded as follows: 0=LWE; 1=both LWE and RWE; 2=RWE. The "unclear" category is dropped from the analysis. The CDU/CSU is the reference category. Far-Right Polling measures vote intention (%) for far-right parties in a given year and state based on Politbarometer data from 1977 to 2019.
*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table C.2: Regression of Extremism Type Referenced in Parliamentary Inquiry on Parties – Election Year Interactions

	Outcome variable: Type of Extremism			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
AfD	−0.29***	−0.25***	−0.22***	−0.17***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
FDP	0.28***	0.27***	0.27***	0.28***
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Greens	0.90***	0.91***	0.89***	0.88***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Left	0.87***	0.87***	0.85***	0.84***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
SPD	0.78***	0.78***	0.77***	0.74***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Election Year	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.09
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
AfD	−0.39***	−0.41***	−0.42***	−0.49***
× Election Year	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
FDP	−0.15	−0.13	−0.14	−0.21
× Election Year	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.12)
Greens	−0.06	−0.06	−0.07	−0.08
× Election Year	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Left	−0.04	−0.04	−0.06	−0.06
× Election Year	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)
SPD	−0.25**	−0.22**	−0.22**	−0.21**
× Election Year	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	0.93***	1.09***	1.08***	1.38***
	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.30)	(0.41)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	9,624	9,624	9,624	9,624
Adjusted R^2	0.29	0.31	0.32	0.33

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded as follows: 0=LWE; 1=both LWE and RWE; 2=RWE. The "unclear" category is dropped from the analysis. The CDU/CSU is the reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

D   Intelligence Reports: Additional Figures and Tables

Figure D.1 shows the trends in violent right-wing extremist and left-wing extremist crime.

Table D.1 shows results for the non-logged difference in chapter length. Table D.2 demonstrates that the partisan difference is not significantly different in East German states that were part of the former GDR. Table D.3 shows logistic regressions that model the partisan difference in the probability of the first chapter in a given report being about RWE/LWE. Average marginal effects shown in panel (b) of Figure 4 are based on models 1, 5, 6, and 10 of Table D.3.

To ensure that our results are robust to different measures of the content of reports, we conducted a keyword-based analysis, using the same procedure and list of terms as in the analyses of speeches and manifestos. Furthermore, we estimated a structural topic model, which is an unsupervised method for discovering latent topics in a collection of texts based on patterns of word co-occurrences. After experimenting with different numbers of topics, we settled on an eight-topic model. Since the model returned three topics associated with RWE and two topics associated with LWE, we summed up the topic proportions for each extremism type at the document- (i.e., page-) level before calculating the logged ratio. Table D.4 and Table D.6 show that the keyword analysis and the topic model replicate the statistically significant partisan difference in the chapter lengths of the intelligence reports. Finally, Table D.5 demonstrates that when using the subset of more generic and time-invariant keywords (see Appendix A), the partisan difference between center-right and center-left interior ministers remains: for *Position* as the outcome variable, the center-right coefficient is statistically significant across all model specifications. When *Bias* is the outcome, the coefficient estimate becomes statistically significant once we account for time fixed effects.

Turning to tests of electoral incentives mechanism, Table D.7 and Table D.8 demonstrate that the partisan gap in intelligence reports does not systematically vary with the electoral popularity of far-right parties. Table D.11 and Table D.12 lead to a similar conclusion with the respect to election years.

Finally, in Table D.9 we only consider violent extremist crimes when constructing the *Bias* outcome measure. In this table, the partisanship coefficient varies in sign and significance across specifications, but it becomes negative and statistically significant in the full model with state and year fixed effects. Furthermore, if we restrict the analysis to the last two decades (2000-2019), when there is much less missingess in crime numbers, the results are more consistently in line with the findings reported in the main manuscript (see Table D.10).

Figure D.1: Trends in Violent Crimes in Germany (1971-2019)
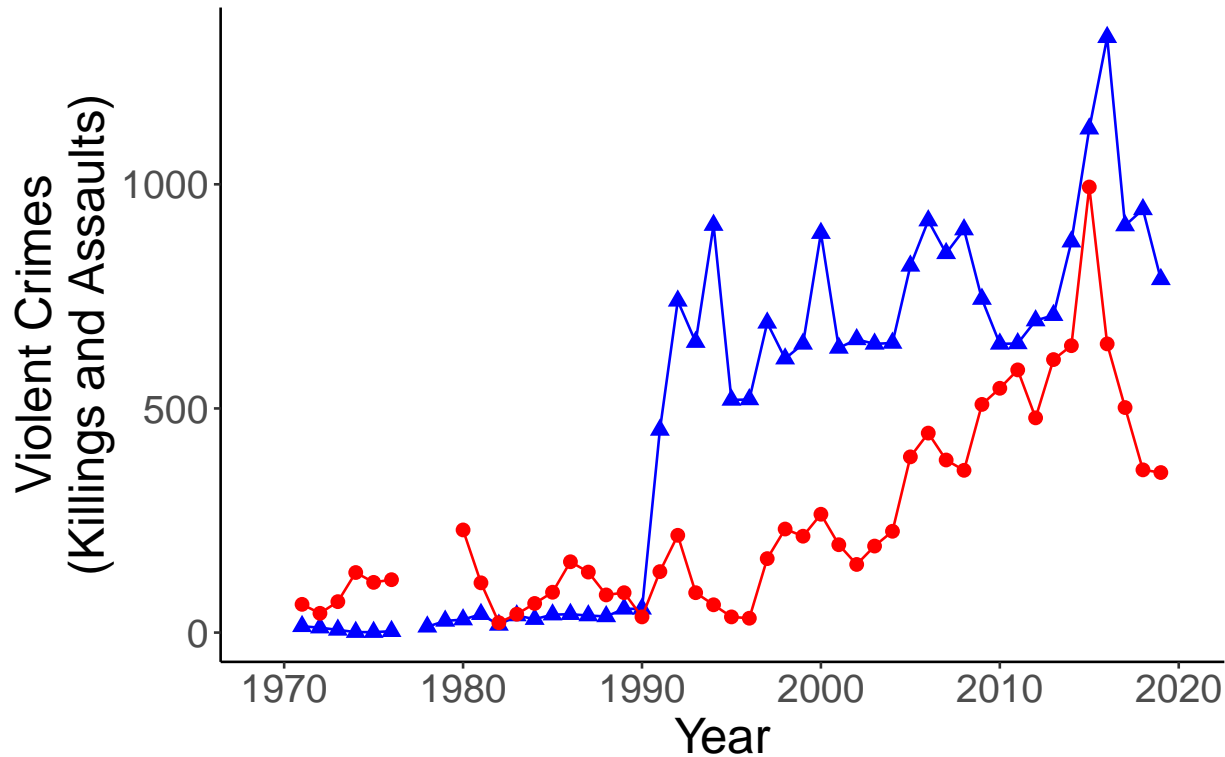
Note: Numbers are drawn from the annual reports of the *Verfassungsschutz*, which publishes extremist crime statistics as recorded by the police.

Table D.1: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – No Logged Ratio

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | | | |
| | Position | | | | Bias | | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−10.72***	−12.53***	−8.10***	−7.11***	−0.11	−0.30**	−0.25**	−0.21*
	(2.32)	(2.29)	(1.86)	(1.93)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.10)
Constant	21.43***	24.40***	−2.27	−7.72	−0.10	0.81***	0.88**	1.26*
	(1.78)	(3.87)	(9.36)	(17.14)	(0.09)	(0.16)	(0.29)	(0.63)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	514	514	514	514	493	493	493	493
Adjusted R^2	0.04	0.33	0.61	0.61	−0.0000	0.54	0.56	0.54

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the difference of the length of RWE and LWE chapters (# RWE Pages − # LWE Pages). *Bias* takes into account the (normalized) number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\frac{\text{\# RWE Pages - \# LWE Pages}}{\text{sd(\# RWE Pages - \# LWE Pages)}} - \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime}}{\text{sd(\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime)}}$. We imputed missing crime values using the value at the federal level, where possible. The SPD is coded as center-left, the CDU/CSU and FDP as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.2: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship Interacted with East Germany Indicator

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | |
| | Position | | | Bias | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.46***	−0.28***	−0.26***	−0.21*	−0.27**	−0.30***
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
East Germany	0.63***	0.56***	0.56***	−0.03	0.06	0.06
	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.13)
Center-Right Interior Minister	0.17	−0.06	−0.08	−0.29	−0.25	−0.22
× East Germany	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.17)
Constant	0.44***	−0.28	−0.76	−0.82***	0.28	0.32
	(0.04)	(0.22)	(0.42)	(0.07)	(0.28)	(0.76)
Year FEs			✓			✓
Decade FEs		✓			✓	
Observations	464	464	464	447	447	447
Adjusted R^2	0.31	0.58	0.59	0.05	0.19	0.20

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE Pages + 0.5}}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE Pages + 0.5}} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE Crime + 0.5}}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.3: Regression of First Chapter Extremism Type on Interior Minister Partisanship

	Outcome variable:									
	First Chapter RWE					First Chapter LWE				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−1.54***	−2.66***	−2.47***	−2.64***	−2.86***	3.13***	4.43***	5.32***	6.86***	6.92***
	(0.24)	(0.40)	(0.41)	(0.48)	(0.51)	(0.73)	(0.95)	(1.49)	(2.03)	(2.08)
RWE Crimes					0.0003***					
					(0.0001)					
LWE Crimes										−0.0003
										(0.001)
Constant	1.96***	1.00*	−3.20	−22.31	−22.21	−4.64***	−4.95***	−2.74	18.18	18.24
	(0.21)	(0.51)	(1.65)	(10,754.01)	(10,754.01)	(0.71)	(1.01)	(2.66)	(79,460.25)	(79,461.45)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓	✓				✓	✓
Decade FEs			✓					✓		
Observations	514	514	514	514	514	514	514	514	514	514
Log Likelihood	−282.98	−180.55	−165.66	−136.79	−127.26	−155.03	−104.75	−41.89	−24.39	−24.05
Akaike Inf. Crit.	569.97	397.10	377.32	415.58	398.52	314.05	245.50	129.79	190.77	192.10

Note: Logit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable equals one if RWE/LWE is discussed in the first chapter of the report and zero if another typoe of extremism is discussed in the first chapter. Missing values in the crime variables were imputed using multiple imputation. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.4: Regression of Keywords in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.39***	−0.37***	−0.22***	−0.22***	−0.24**	−0.19*	−0.36***	−0.39***
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	0.51***	0.47***	−0.93***	−2.92***	−0.90***	−0.46**	1.13***	1.42**
	(0.05)	(0.11)	(0.17)	(0.27)	(0.06)	(0.14)	(0.24)	(0.48)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	514	514	514	514	493	493	493	493
Adjusted R^2	0.07	0.34	0.83	0.87	0.02	0.13	0.35	0.39

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.5: Regression of Keywords in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – Restricted Set of Keywords

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.21***	−0.26***	−0.21***	−0.22***	−0.12	−0.14	−0.35***	−0.40***
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Constant	0.86***	1.06***	1.26***	1.59***	−0.56***	0.10	2.27***	2.36***
	(0.03)	(0.07)	(0.21)	(0.37)	(0.06)	(0.16)	(0.26)	(0.52)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	514	514	514	514	493	493	493	493
Adjusted R²	0.04	0.36	0.49	0.52	0.002	0.13	0.39	0.44

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE keywords} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.6: Regression of Topic Proportions in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.09***	−0.08***	−0.04***	−0.03***	−0.11***	−0.07***	−0.15***	−0.16***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Constant	0.27***	0.22***	−0.19***	−0.36***	−1.15***	−0.82***	1.61***	1.46***
	(0.003)	(0.01)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.03)	(0.07)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	94,831	94,831	94,831	94,831	93,269	93,269	93,269	93,269
Adjusted R²	0.01	0.06	0.14	0.14	0.003	0.11	0.32	0.38

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors clustered on the report-level in parentheses. The unit of observation is the page. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE topic prop.} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE topic prop.} + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE topic. prop.} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE topic prop.} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio (state-year level) were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. Because the STM returned multiple topics per extremism type, we took the sum of the topic proportions by extremism type for each document (i.e., page). The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.7: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship and Far-Right Polling

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.37***	−0.32***	−0.19***	−0.18***	−0.20*	−0.20*	−0.29**	−0.31**
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Far-Right Polling	0.05***	0.04***	0.02*	0.01	0.07***	0.07***	0.04	0.05
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Center-Right Interior Minister	0.002	−0.01	−0.02	−0.01	−0.05*	−0.04*	−0.03	−0.03
× Far-Right Polling	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Constant	0.44***	0.37***	−0.55***	−0.88***	−1.04***	−0.54***	0.90*	0.89*
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.21)	(0.07)	(0.15)	(0.44)	(0.44)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	481	481	481	481	464	464	464	464
Adjusted R²	0.16	0.43	0.71	0.71	0.07	0.18	0.28	0.30

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Pages} + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Pages} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. Far-Right Polling measures vote intention (%) for far-right parties in a given year and state based on Politbarometer data from 1977 to 2019. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.8: Regression of Organization Keywords in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship and Far-Right Polling

	Outcome variable: $\log \frac{\text{\# Org. keywords in RWE Chapter} + 0.5}{\text{\# Org. keywords in LWE Chapter} + 0.5}$				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.47***	−0.42***	−0.20**	−0.18*	−0.13*
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Far-Right Polling	0.05**	0.04*	0.02	0.02	−0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Ratio # Words RWE/LWE Chapter					0.31***
					(0.02)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.01	−0.02	−0.04*	−0.04*	−0.004
× Far-Right Polling	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Constant	0.34***	0.39**	−0.86***	−0.80*	−0.90***
	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.17)	(0.31)	(0.26)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓	✓
Decade FEs			✓		
Observations	481	481	481	481	481
Adjusted R²	0.12	0.35	0.60	0.61	0.73

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. Far-Right Polling measures vote intention (%) for far-right parties in a given year and state based on Politbarometer data from 1977 to 2019. Keywords used: "organization"; "organized". *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.9: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – Violent Crimes Only

	Outcome variable:			
	Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Center-Right Interior Minister	0.15	0.23*	−0.13	−0.24***
	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Constant	−0.34***	−0.44*	2.11***	1.39**
	(0.07)	(0.17)	(0.26)	(0.43)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	495	495	495	495
Adjusted R^2	0.003	0.16	0.50	0.67

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Pages } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Pages } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Violent Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Violent Crime } + 0.5}$. We imputed missing crime values using the value at the federal level, where possible. The SPD is coded as center-left, the CDU/CSU and FDP as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.10: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – Violent Crimes 2000-2019 Only

	Outcome variable:			
	Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.08	−0.27**	−0.22**	−0.30***
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)
Constant	−0.14*	−0.03	−0.33*	−0.61***
	(0.07)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.17)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓
Decade FEs			✓	
Observations	322	322	322	322
Adjusted R^2	−0.0003	0.29	0.41	0.60

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Pages } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Pages } + 0.5} - \log \frac{\# \text{ RWE Violent Crime } + 0.5}{\# \text{ LWE Violent Crime } + 0.5}$. We imputed missing crime values using the value at the federal level, where possible. The SPD is coded as center-left, the CDU/CSU and FDP as center-right. Only using data from 2000-2019. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.11: Regression of Chapter Length in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – Election Year Interactions

	Outcome variable:							
	Position				Bias			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.39***	−0.44***	−0.27***	−0.25***	−0.28**	−0.28**	−0.42***	−0.42***
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Election Year	−0.06	−0.07	−0.02	−0.004	−0.07	−0.07	−0.05	0.003
	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.14)	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Center-Right Interior Minister	0.04	0.12	0.07	0.05	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.07
× Election Year	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.18)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Constant	0.59***	0.58***	−0.33	−0.81*	−0.83***	−0.83***	1.35***	1.56**
	(0.05)	(0.09)	(0.21)	(0.37)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.25)	(0.51)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓				✓
Decade FEs			✓				✓	
Observations	514	514	514	514	493	493	493	493
Adjusted R^2	0.08	0.38	0.70	0.71	0.02	0.02	0.32	0.35

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Pages} + 0.5}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE Pages} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Pages} + 0.5} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime} + 0.5}{\text{\# LWE Crime} + 0.5}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level (from the federal reports), if possible. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table D.12: Regression of Organization Keywords in Intelligence Reports on Interior Minister Partisanship – Election Year Interactions

|	Outcome variable:				
	Outcome variable: $\log \frac{\text{\# Org. keywords in RWE Chapter} + 0.5}{\text{\# Org. keywords in LWE Chapter} + 0.5}$				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Center-Right Interior Minister	−0.57***	−0.58***	−0.35***	−0.31***	−0.13*
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Election Year	−0.15	−0.13	−0.06	−0.04	0.001
	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)
Ratio # Words RWE/LWE Chapter					0.32***
					(0.02)
Center-Right Interior Minister	0.17	0.19	0.12	0.05	−0.05
× Election Year	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.10)
Constant	0.50***	0.58***	−0.23	−0.82	−1.03*
	(0.06)	(0.12)	(0.30)	(0.54)	(0.45)
State FEs		✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs				✓	✓
Decade FEs			✓		
Observations	514	514	514	514	514
Adjusted R^2	0.10	0.34	0.59	0.60	0.73

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The SPD is coded as center-left and the CDU/CSU and the FDP are coded as center-right. Keywords used: "organization"; "organized". *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

E Police Union Journals: Additional Figures and Tables

Figure E.1 displays the distribution of police union journals in our sample.

Table E.1 shows the results when using the difference in keywords instead of the logged ratio. In Table E.2, we show that the findings for police union journals reported in the main paper are robust to constructing the bias measure by only considering violent extremist crimes. Note that our sample of police union journals starts in the year 2000, which is why we do not need to conduct a separate analysis that subsets by observations post-2000. In Table E.3, we demonstrate that the results for the police union journals reported in the main manuscript are largely robust to restricting the keyword list to our subset of more generic and time-invariant terms (see Appendix A).

Figure E.1: Distribution of Available Police Union Journal Issues by Jurisdiction, Year, and Union
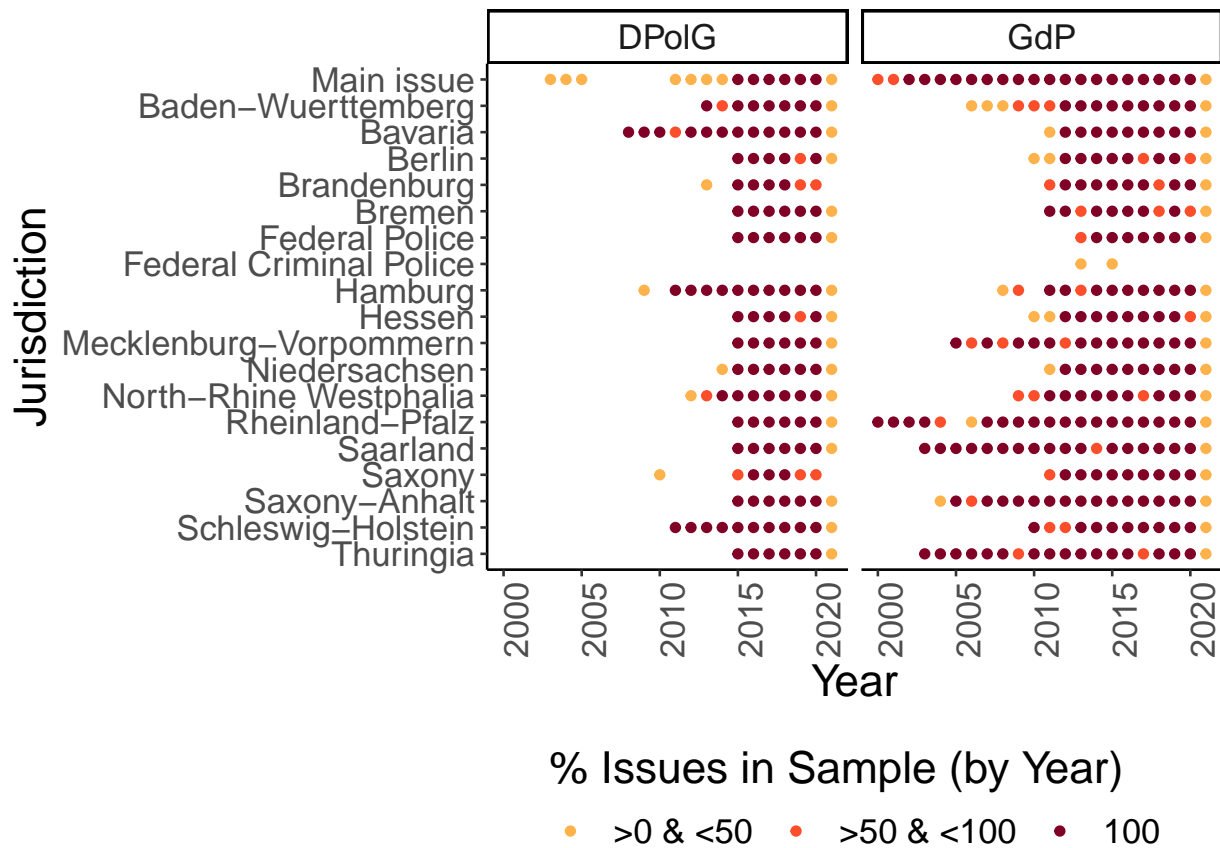
Note: The figure shows the percentage of issues published in a given year by a given union for a given jurisdiction that are in our sample. The figure starts in the year 2000 because this is the earliest year represented in our sample.

Table E.1: Regression of Keywords in Police Union Journals on Union – No Logged Ratio

	Outcome variable:					
	Position			Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
DPolG	−1.29***	−1.09***	−1.12***	−0.13**	−0.24***	−0.12**
	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.28)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	1.09***	0.62	−0.66	−1.10***	−2.10***	−1.98***
	(0.15)	(0.59)	(1.75)	(0.03)	(0.08)	(0.23)
State FEs		✓	✓		✓	✓
Year FEs			✓			✓
Observations	4,092	4,092	4,092	3,617	3,617	3,617
Adjusted R²	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.002	0.44	0.46

Note: OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is the difference between right-wing and left-wing keywords (# RWE keywords − # LWE keywords). *Bias* takes into account the (normalized) number of RWE and LWE crimes: $\frac{\text{\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords}}{\text{sd(\# RWE keywords - \# LWE keywords)}} - \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime}}{\text{sd(\# RWE Crime - \# LWE Crime)}}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level where possible. GdP is excluded as the reference category. Data goes from 2000-2021. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table E.2: Regression of Keywords in Police Union Journals on Union – Violent Crimes Only

	Outcome variable:		
	Bias		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
DPolG	−0.36***	−0.41***	−0.24***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	−0.55***	−0.48***	−0.66**
	(0.02)	(0.10)	(0.25)
State FEs		✓	✓
Year FEs			✓
Observations	3,617	3,617	3,617
Adjusted R²	0.02	0.14	0.27

Note: DPolG is the right-leaning union. OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE keywords + 0.5}} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Violent Crime + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE Violent Crime + 0.5}}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level where possible. GdP is excluded as the reference category. Data goes from 2000-2021. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table E.3: Regression of Keywords in Police Union Journals on Union – Restricted Set of Keywords

| | Outcome variable: | | | | | |
| | Position | | | Bias | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
DPolG	−0.16***	−0.14***	−0.12***	0.03	−0.07**	−0.11***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	0.19***	0.15***	0.27*	−1.37***	−1.25***	−1.34***
	(0.01)	(0.04)	(0.13)	(0.02)	(0.06)	(0.15)
State FEs		✓	✓		✓	✓
Year FEs			✓			✓
Observations	4,092	4,092	4,092	3,617	3,617	3,617
Adjusted R^2	0.01	0.08	0.09	0.0000	0.37	0.42

Note: DPolG is the right-leaning union. OLS coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. *Position* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE keywords + 0.5}}$. *Bias* is calculated as $\log \frac{\text{\# RWE keywords + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE keywords + 0.5}} - \log \frac{\text{\# RWE Crime + 0.5}}{\text{\# LWE Crime + 0.5}}$. Missing values in the crime ratio were imputed using the value on the federal level where possible. GdP is excluded as the reference category. *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001