



state government of Ernst Albrecht will probably lose to a Watermelon Coalition.

As late as six months ago, there seemed no possibility of changing that outcome. However, in November 1985, a series of advertisements appeared in West Germany's major national-circulation newspapers, signed by the Patriots for Germany, and calling for a new movement to save West Germany from being "decoupled" from the West. In what some observers described as an "underground political earthquake," word of the new initiative spread rapidly. Members of middle-size industry and middle-class entrepreneurs driven into bankruptcy, conservative politicians disgusted with their government's capitulation to East bloc pressure on such issues as participation in the Strategic Defense Initiative, outraged farmers, and Social Democrats disenfranchised by their pro-Moscow party leadership responded enthusiastically, flooding the Patriots' office with letters and telephone calls.

The Soviet KGB responded with a barrage of threats and intimidation. But the achievement of a full slate now makes the Patriots into a major party in the elections. According to German election law, the party will enter the state legislature if it wins at least 5% of the total vote in the state. But its spokesmen say it aims at much more than that.

Interview: Karlheinz Derbfuss

'The middle class is being wiped out'

Karlheinz Derbfuss ran a supermarket in Melle before his retirement. He was a member of the board of the Retail Traders' Association of Osnabruck-Emsland and is a member of the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Osnabruck. He was a co-founder of Patriots for Germany, and is now a member of its state executive committee. Here are excerpts from an interview published in the weekly newspaper Neue Solidarität.

Q: Mr. Derbfuss, you are a member of the state executive committee of the Patriots for Germany in Lower Saxony and a candidate in the 81st election district, in Melle. How did you come to join the Patriots for Germany?

Derbfuss: A couple of months ago, I met two of my current colleagues organizing in the street, and discovered that their views corresponded to a large extent with my own. I set about to find out more about these ideas. After long consideration, reading newspapers and books, especially those of Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche, I came to the conclusion that the only way to end the misery which we find in Germany and in the world, is for us to come forward publicly as patriots. After much discussion, we finally decided on the founding of a party on March 23, 1986, since only a party can really take part in political life and realize political conceptions.

Q: You are first of all opposed to the SPD [Social Democrats] and the Greens?

Derbfuss: Yes, I am convinced that both of these parties are on Moscow's line. When I think, for example, about Gerhard Schröder of the Lower Saxony SPD—who wants to become governor of the state, who had previously participated in the riots of the political leftists in Berlin, and who, according to what I have heard, worked in the office of lawyer Schily for many years [Otto Schily, Green Party leader and lawyer for terrorists—ed]—that's enough for me. And then when I find out about his numerous trips to the G.D.R. [East Germany], particularly his meetings with Erich Honecker [East German party chief], then I really get the feeling that he is trying to sell us out to the East.

Q: What about the CDU [Christian Democratic Union]?

Derbfuss: Oh, the CDU! When I look at the list of candidates that the CDU in Lower Saxony has put forward for the

state legislature, then I get the feeling that everyone in the CDU who represents the ideas of Mr. Todenhöfer or Mr. Dregger [Jürgen Todenhöfer and Alfred Dregger are pro-defense leaders of the CDU—ed.] has either decided not to run for office at all, or is sticking to those posts which do not involve these ideas at all any more.

Q: Does this apply to the area of defense policy?

Derbfuss: Yes. The CDU is departing more and more from its earlier strong tie to America and the Strategic Defense Initiative program. Because, if we are not in the position, to counterpose something equivalent to the East in the defense policy area, then we are quickly out of the window—we've surrendered to the Russians. The Soviets only accept: equal strength, equal power.

Q: What do you find wrong with the CDU's economic policy?

Derbfuss: That it has so neglected the middle class. This is my own experience—for over 40 years I ran a food store. I have seen that, during the recent years, nothing is being done any more for the middle class, which composes a third of the population, so that many of these people are being ruined. Whole occupational groups are being virtually wiped out, for example, the food handlers. In the last 20 years, 170,000 food shops have been closed—more than half of those previously existing. . . .

Q: What are the principles of tax and credit policy, that you want to have the Lower Saxony legislature adopt?

Derbfuss: The basic principle is a "two-tiered credit policy," with lower interest rates for productive investment, of 1-2%, whereas speculators would have to pay higher interest rates. This would mean that most money would return into the economy itself, and all parts of the economy would benefit.

Q: The hot phase of the election campaign is now beginning. How do you see the chances of the Patriots to enter the legislature?

Derbfuss: I think that the chances are decidedly good. The time could not be more favorable. The experiences of my work of the last weeks, in signing up members on the streets, talking with people, have convinced me that more and more people are saying: Things cannot go on in this way, there must be a change, and thank God that finally there are people who are saying the truth!

And when in North Rhine-Westphalia and Schleswig-Holstein, over 30% did not vote, and when the latest polls in Lower Saxony indicate that the number of non-voters will be even higher, it tells me that our primary task is to talk to this hitherto silent, or forgotten part of our population, and say to them how we can find the way out of our misery. If we do that, I think that 5% will prove to be a trifle.

Interview: Robert Gräper

'It was the CDU that abandoned us'

Mr. Gräper has been a CDU member throughout his political life; for 18 years he was the CDU mayor of his hometown of Garstedt. He is deputy chairman of the Evangelical Working Group of Lower Saxony. A co-founder of Patriots for Germany, he is a member of its state executive committee and a candidate for the third spot on its state-wide slate.

Q: Mr. Gräper, for 40 years you have been a CDU member; you were mayor of your hometown of Garstedt; and now you are running in the coming state elections in Lower Saxony with the Patriots for Germany. Why?

Gräper: Why? That's an easy question to answer: It was not I who left the CDU, but the CDU which left me—that is, it abandoned its own founding program. My views have not changed. I want our middle class to function properly again, and with the CDU this is simply no longer possible. After reading a book by Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche, it became clear to me that the Patriots, as far as the middle class is concerned, have not only the right national concept, but also the right international one.

Q: So you say that the CDU has left the middle class in the lurch?

Gräper: Yes, we know from the federal statistical office, that every year 14,000-16,000 middle class people go bankrupt. This means, that every day, 50-60 businesses are forced to close their doors.

For years in the CDU I fought for the social market economy; I believed that the "change" [the CDU's campaign slogan during the Schmidt government—ed.] would finally do something for the middle class, but this was unfortunately not the case. All my petitions were in vain. . . .

Q: Where do the Patriots for Germany stand on the SPD?

Gräper: I knew Mr. Schumacher [Kurt Schumacher, the staunch anti-communist postwar leader of the Social Democrats], and respected him a great deal. And I even had a bit of respect for Helmut Schmidt. . . . has sunk so low, that you can't take them seriously at all. The SPD is drifting toward the East.

We do not want to be a satellite of the East; we do not want to be neutralized either; we must therefore take care to keep the American Army here for our protection. And we should send a resolution to America saying that no troops should be pulled out. Our policy means: The Federal Republic is fully a part of the Western alliance!