

Speaking before a meeting of the “Group of 24” on Dec. 13 that was discussing aid to Poland and Hungary, Polish Foreign Minister Skubiszewski said, “Unemployment is about to return to Poland.” The highest priority for the country must be food aid, he emphasized, and added that the European Community food-aid package for Poland was being poorly coordinated. Despite the reality of acute food shortages, Skubiszewski said that Poland would continue to export lamb and other meat products, because the country requires foreign currency to repay loans.

The London *Independent* reported on Dec. 14 that queues for meat have disappeared, since no one can afford meat anyway.

### **Demands for emergency action**

Although the Bush and Thatcher governments are fully committed to the IMF program, this desperate economic situation has received some increasing recognition in Great Britain, following a visit there by Lech Walesa at the end of November 1989. Conservative Member of Parliament Sir Bernard Braine called in Parliament on Dec. 1 for an emergency airlift of food and medical supplies to Poland, saying that the European Community must act immediately to prevent *starvation* there. “Britain owes a very special debt of honor to Poland, which so far has not been repaid,” he said. “At the end of our common struggle in war against unspeakable tyranny, Poland was betrayed. Now by their own efforts the Poles are throwing off 45 years of Soviet occupation and communist government. The opportunity is there for Britain to repay that debt. I hope we shall not fail to rise to the occasion and do it quickly.”

Conservative MP Timothy Boswell rose and said, “It is no good being a free Pole this winter if one is also a dead Pole.”

In a debate in the House of Lords on Dec. 13, Baroness Cox reported that the problems there were catastrophic and required urgent help—on the scale of the Marshall Plan—from Britain. Having recently visited a hospital in Poland, she said Polish parents and nurses are seeing children dying before their eyes, who could be saved if basic supplies were available. “These months are critical to democratic change,” she said. “Unless the Polish people can be helped as a matter of urgency, people who are at the end of their tether may give up the struggle for reform and sink back into darkness and despair. Massive and appropriately directed aid is needed for the pump priming of the Polish economy.”

When Lech Walesa addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress in November 1989, he noted that there has been an abundance of rhetoric in support of Poland coming from the Western countries, but that the market value of fine words is falling, since action has not followed them. There is precious little time in which the United States and its allies can still act to shore up the most significant setback to world communism since the Bolshevik Revolution.

## **Gorbachov's red star fell in East Germany**

by Rainer Apel

For more than four decades, Soviet rule over Eastern Europe was secured by a crucial element of power: the existence of the Stalinist one-party state of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) in the eastern part of Germany, the state with the misleading name “German Democratic Republic” (G.D.R.). Without the staunch pro-Moscow ally in East Berlin, the Soviets would not have been able to keep intact the Iron Curtain dividing Europe since 1945.

Moreover, postwar Soviet policy toward the West was based on the one fundamental assumption that of all the satellite states Moscow controlled in Eastern Europe, the SED state was, and would always be, the most reliable one. It simply had to be reliable, because no fewer than 400,000 soldiers of the so-called “Western Group of Soviet Armed Forces,” to a large extent elite units, depended on East Germany as their main bridgehead for an eventual invasion of Western Europe.

Stability of Soviet rule in the G.D.R. also was the main precondition for the “Gorbymania” hoax targeting the minds of the West German population. And, as the outbursts of mass-based “Gorbymania” during Gorbachov’s visit to West Germany in mid-June 1989 seemed to indicate, Gorbachov’s public relations ploy was a success story. What was overlooked by most Soviet Union experts then, was the fact that Gorbachov had very few fans in East Germany—and it was from there, that the Soviet leader’s star began to fall.

### **Tiananmen was the trigger**

It began with the bloody massacre in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square in June; this was the trigger for everything that has developed since July-August in East Germany. The refugee wave of way over 200,000 East Germans, mostly aged 18 to 25, could not be explained but by the fear that a Tiananmen-style crackdown was also possible in East Germany. After all, SED party leaders like Egon Krenz had openly supported the bloody crackdown on the Chinese students.

This, and the immediate result of the summer refugee wave—namely, a loss of 2-5% of the work force, mostly young workers, in critical sectors of the economy—unleashed public mass protest in the East German population. With so many people leaving the G.D.R., most of them through the newly opened Hungarian borders with Austria after Sept. 11, the days of the SED state were evidently numbered. The ghastly perspective of an entire population

## Did the KGB kill Palme?

1989 was the year of utter failure of Sweden's political establishment in attempting to finally close the Olof Palme murder case. It was also the year of vindication of Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and his associates' warnings of possible Soviet authorship of the assassination of the Swedish prime minister. While early efforts to pin the blame for the 1986 Palme murder on the associates of LaRouche failed miserably from a purely legal standpoint, the massive campaign of villification of and disinformation about, LaRouche contributed significantly to shaping the political preconditions for LaRouche to be framed up and railroaded in Judge Bryan's infamous rocket-docket in Alexandria, Virginia.

After failing to link LaRouche's Swedish associates to the Palme murder, a grand attempt was staged to close further embarrassing investigations into the case by sending an alleged lone assassin, a common criminal, to life-long imprisonment. On July 27, 1989, Christer Pettersson was convicted on the basis of testimony given by Palme's widow Lisbet. Within less than a month, on Aug. 24, Sweden's largest-circulation daily, *Expressen*, spear-headed revelations that the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachov had foreknowledge of, and probably itself instigated, the assassination. The exposé was based on the Swedish Security Police's electronic bugging of a Soviet diplomat and intelligence agent stationed in Stockholm at the time of the murder.

After little more than another month, on Oct. 12, unanimous Stockholm Court of Appeals summarily ordered Pettersson released, for lack of evidence. While reviewing the evidence of Soviet involvement in the Palme murder was not the task of the appeals court, blunt demands issued publicly by Moscow's Ambassador Boris Pankin, repeatedly challenging the Swedish government to officially apologize for the press exposés of Moscow's role, did have an effect in blocking further pursuit of the Soviet track in the murder investigation.

Although not going so far as to officially apologize for the press revelations, the Swedish government reached a new all-time low in submissiveness to Moscow's imperial policy. During a November visit in the U.S.S.R., Foreign Minister Sten Andersson caused a furor at home, as well as in the Baltic states, by insisting that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are not occupied by Moscow. Visiting Prague on Nov. 24 to award the Olof Palme Prize to Vaclav Havel—barring another heavy-handed Soviet intervention, the likely next President of Czechoslovakia—Andersson during the awarding ceremony was treated to the following passage of Havel's address:

"I thank you for coming to me. During these dramatic days, when our history is being determined, I could not, even for an hour, leave my people. We are after all de facto, if not de jure, an occupied country—as well as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania." An irony, that so many years after Palme's famous denunciation of Husak's post-Dubcek puppet regime as "the creatures of dictatorship," Sweden's foreign minister had to be rebuffed by the foremost representative of Czech democracy.

deserting its state, was becoming more and more realistic.

The SED had to collapse under such conditions, despite stubborn tactical resistance and playing for time. One of the developments that accelerated the decline of the SED, was the loss of one-third of its membership of 2.3 million between late September and early December. Mostly workers returned their party cards in protest of the SED's policy.

Workers in numerous industrial combines of the G.D.R. threatened a labor walk-out, forcing the SED to disarm the 400,000 Kampfgruppen militia in the factories. Leaving arms in the hands of ever-less reliable workers' militias, seemed too risky for the SED: Who would guarantee that they wouldn't turn these arms against the party in a broad social-political conflict? Unlike June 1953, when several million unarmed workers rose up against the SED regime and were gunned down by Soviet tanks, the threat of a labor strike in October-November 1989 was far more lethal to the regime.

The collapse of the communist regime in neighboring Czechoslovakia, under a well-organized, countrywide warning labor strike in late November, was the handwriting on the wall for the SED in East Germany.

In tandem with the increasing mass protest in the streets of basically every single East German city, the big ones as well as the small, warning strikes of calcium-mine and transport workers, the threat of strike in the utility sectors of the southeastern region of the Lausitz, the entire SED system was forced into disintegration.

On Oct. 18, SED leader Erich Honecker was replaced by Egon Krenz with the perspective of "straightening things out" in a matter of a few weeks. A new Politburo was formed, but only a week later, one-third of the Politburo was forced out through mass protests. The SED-led government had to be dumped; a new government was hastily put together under longtime SED Central Committee member Hans Modrow,

## Why Germany must be reunified

*From an open letter to all Germans, issued by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairman of the Patriots for Germany party.*

. . . People in the German Democratic Republic can be tremendously proud that they, through their peaceful revolution, have overthrown one of the world's seemingly most unyielding repressive regimes. They have given the entire world the ideal that the question of freedom is a principle worth fighting for. And they have, through their courageous and simultaneously admirably disciplined course of action, gained an incredible opportunity for German history, namely, the right to self-determination for the entire German people. . . .

West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl also deserves recognition for his 10-point program [announced on Nov. 28 in Bonn] for gradual reunification that offers a practical proposal for overcoming the unnatural division of Germany. How right Kohl was not to discuss this step, either with the allies or with [Foreign Minister] Hans-Dietrich Genscher, was powerfully underscored by the reactions from abroad, which have ranged from open threats to outrageous abuse. . . .

In light of this hysteria, it is necessary to set the facts straight again: There is no real danger either in West or in East Germany, and no one here is preparing for war. The fact is, the Federal Republic of Germany can boast a 40-year history of democracy, and the people of East Germany are now likewise powerfully mobilizing for democracy. They simply don't want to be gypped out of their lives anymore; and who can blame them if they're distrustful toward the twists and turns of the new wry-necks?\*

They have simply had enough of being spied on by this unconstitutional state, and of working long and hard and ending up with nothing. . . .

The Patriots for Germany have demanded as the highest priority the construction of a railroad network from Paris through Berlin to Warsaw, along with other urgently needed infrastructural projects and, above all, fostering the formation of a productive *Mittelstand*.\*\* That the West German government has now begun something in this regard is certainly a step in the right direction. But as long as discussion of economic aid is tied to the barbaric conditions of the International Monetary Fund and its murderous demands for austerity, the overall reform movement in the East bloc will still be in danger. It is highly probable that repression, and then probably civil war will follow the economic chaos.

\* The wryneck, known in German as *Wendehals* (turn-neck), is a European woodpecker which is able to rotate its head a full 180 degrees, and so has come to be a label for those who, like some East German communists, are now trying to pass themselves off as part of the democratic opposition.

\*\* Small and medium-sized industry.

who was as hastily made a member of the new Politburo. The media had spared no efforts over several weeks, to build up Modrow's image as a "reformer."

It turned out that Modrow was not acceptable as long as people like Egon Krenz, who had hailed the Tiananmen massacre in June, occupied leadership posts. Six weeks after his overthrow of Honecker, Krenz had to go as well, like most of the senior officers of the *Stasi* (the state security apparatus) and the police, and all the heads of the 15 SED party districts. The borders with West Germany, the Berlin Wall, were made transparent, and 15 of the 16.7 million East Germans got traveling visas for the first time in 28 years. The entire SED Politburo and Central committee resigned; a new transition leadership and a crisis roundtable between the SED and seven opposition groups were installed, early elections for parliament were conceded for May 1990 (instead of May 1991)—but none of these rearguard operations helped to contain the mass protest in the streets.

Even without Krenz at the top, Modrow is not acceptable

to the East German people. Through several weeks of mass protest, they have outgrown the ideology of socialism, of the separate socialist state of the G.D.R., and have begun to call for a reunified Germany.

This, the certain feeling of being part of something that is larger than the SED state, gives additional strength to the mass movement in East Germany. It turns more insistent in its political demands. Another reshuffle of the Modrow government is being called for already, as well as a referendum on the East German constitution to take place even before the projected early elections in May 1990.

It is not to be ruled out that this referendum will toll the final bell for Moscow's SED puppet regime in East Germany. Even if the referendum is not the formal beginning of German unity, the removal of this crucial cornerstone of Soviet rule over all of Eastern Europe will mark the end of the system of Yalta that kept Europe divided over 44 years. The revolutionary process in East Germany is the catalyst for the collapse of the entire system of Soviet control in Eastern Europe.