

New election defeat for Germany's Schröder

by Werner Zuse

The population of state of Saxony delivered a stunning defeat to Germany's ruling Social Democratic-Green coalition in Berlin in the elections held Sept. 19. The results followed a pattern of rejection of the ruling coalition already delivered by the voters in the states of Saarland, Brandenburg, and North Rhine-Westphalia. The German Social Democratic Party (SPD) won less than 11% of the votes in the Saxony polls; and the Greens again did not succeed in winning a seat in parliament, receiving less than 3% of the votes. Combined, the ruling coalition received less than 14% of the vote.

The ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU) government in Saxony also lost votes. Only the post-communist PDS party increased its margin by about 6%. The PDS is now the second largest party in Brandenburg and Saxony.

Only one year ago in Saxony, the CDU had lost about 16% of the vote that it received in 1994, with many CDU incumbents losing their seats in parliament. The reason was the disastrous economic policy of the government of Prime Minister Helmut Kohl, who had promised "blossoming regions" to the people in the East. Instead, as the German government followed the economic dictates of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), all that the East got was deindustrialization. Saxony, which was the center of the machine-tool and nuclear industry of the former German Democratic Republic, lost 90% of its machine-tool capacity, and its nuclear industry was dismantled. Experts now come to the former nuclear research center near Dresden to see how to *dismantle* nuclear power plants.

Saxony governor Kurt Biedenkopf from the ruling CDU government in Dresden had organized construction of some factories in the state, and also proposed a minimum rent to be financed by the federal government, measures which salvaged some votes for the CDU.

Now that German Chancellor Kurt Schröder has declined a policy of a Marshall Plan for Eastern Europe, and instead embraced British Prime Minister Tony Blair's "new labor policy," his SPD is receiving the same blows at the polls as Kohl received.

Meanwhile, many academics and educated people in Saxony voted for the PDS as an alternative to the corrupt parties of the west. The PDS, whose leadership is comprised of the former East German elite, has more members in the east than the SPD and CDU combined.

BüSo gains

One party that gained in the elections was the Solidarity Civil Rights Movement (BüSo), which has attacked the IMF shock therapy since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and has circulated the 1990 "Productive Triangle" proposal of American statesman Lyndon LaRouche throughout the east. LaRouche proposed to use the highly educated labor force of the east to build the Productive Triangle defined by the cities of Berlin, Paris, and Vienna, and link it with a Eurasian Land-Bridge, a proposed rail project that would stretch from Tokyo and Beijing in the east to Paris.

One rail line of the Eurasian Land-Bridge goes through Saxony, and BüSo candidate Ronald Galle told Dresden voters that the Eurasian landbridge can create millions of new skilled jobs, if Germany becomes part of the "Survivors' Club" of Eurasia.

In last year's federal elections, the BüSo ran three candidates. This year, Galle won 1.2% of the vote in his district near Dresden. BüSo campaigns focussed on Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Zwickau, and Görlitz at the German-Polish border. BüSo posters featured a map of Eurasia and the slogan "New Silk Road—Peace Means Development" in German, Russian, and Chinese.

Only the public TV and radio station Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR) reported on the BüSo's campaign. MDR did two interviews with Ronald Galle, and broadcast them on radio and TV. The BüSo campaign also featured paid spot campaign ads with party chairman Helga Zepp-LaRouche. In the city of Bautzen, famous for its former East German prison for political prisoners, the campaign ad was aired 20 times, and in Strehla, on the Elbe river northwest of Dresden, 56 times during the last week of the campaign. In the print media, the second-largest newspaper in Saxony, the *Sächsische Zeitung*, reported in a short notice on the BüSo campaign, mentioning the circulation of 50,000 leaflets throughout the state. The leaflets called for a "coalition of survival," and brought to voters the reality of the financial crash and the geopolitical escalation in Caucasus.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche spoke at an election event in Galle's district, where she called on voters to stop the slide into a "New Dark Age," because all the other parties are not willing to leave the sinking *Titanic* of the dying world financial system. Only by overcoming cynicism and becoming active in the BüSo, will people be contributing to the effort to prevent the collapse of civilization.

As a result of its campaign, the BüSo doubled its membership. To educate its recruits, the BüSo will use the great cultural tradition of Saxony, where Friedrich Schiller wrote his tragedy *Don Carlos*, and where the composer Robert Schumann was born. Such cultural inspiration is crucial for cracking through the 44-year-long tradition of the communists' materialist worldview, which was then followed, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, by the frenzy of monetarist accumulation.