

German Election Campaign: Neo-Cons Under Attack

by Rainer Apel

Prior to Germany's national elections on Sept. 18, the LaRouche movement's party here, the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo), had achieved quite an impact. In a preliminary review of the election campaign, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, candidate for Chancellor of the BüSo party, said on Sept. 13: "It is my view that this campaign is the best we ever had. We have addressed all the crucial subjects, like the question of the D-mark, the sovereignty over our own currency, unemployment, the war and peace issue, the new financial architecture, the Eurasian Land-Bridge. And I think that also what is very clear, is a growing recognition factor of the BüSo. And I think we have really reached a very important and crucial point in this campaign, because, although it's not yet the breakthrough we obviously all are hoping to reach, it is a solid campaign, and I think we have accomplished quite a bit."

The growing recognition factor for the BüSo is, as Zepp-LaRouche added, due especially to the fact that, unlike the other parties, the BüSo always picks up on strategic developments in the United States and elsewhere in the world, instantly—and often, several weeks earlier than the establishment parties, which tend to run on auto pilot, with campaign issues that have lost all relevance, in the meantime.

Zepp-LaRouche also pointed out that because of delayed voting in the Dresden-I district, the final result of the elections will not be sealed on Sept. 18, but only on Oct. 2, when the last votes have come in, in Dresden. The two crucial weeks in between can still make a

big difference, because of the way that voters perceive the turbulent international situation. The two extra weeks of campaigning will also influence votes in the rest of Germany, especially among the undecided voters, who know that things may certainly change between Sept. 18 and Oct. 2, and therefore many of them voted as if they too, were to vote on Oct. 2. Voting in Dresden-I (District 160) had to be delayed after the sudden death, Sept. 7, of the German National Party



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"It is only our program for a state investment program, which could move Germany forward, and could achieve productive, full employment once again," stated BüSo Chancellor candidate Helga Zepp-LaRouche in her last election leaflet. Shown here are LaRouche Youth Movement members campaigning for the BüSo in Leipzig.



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After Zepp-LaRouche slammed the neo-cons over their non-response to the Katrina disaster, incumbent Chancellor Gerhard Schröder picked up on the issue saying during a Sept. 4 debate with neo-con Christian Democratic challenger Angela Merkel, that hurricane Katrina proved that a strong, active state is indispensable for the protection of the citizens. Here Schröder is addressing an election rally.

(NPD) candidate there. A new candidate had to be elected by the NPD, new ballots had to be printed for the 260,000 voters of that district, and mail-in voters had to be notified of the changes.

A few thousand votes less for the opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in Dresden can shift the total balance, as happened in the last national elections in September 2002, when an advantage of only 6,000 votes nationally over the CDU, gave Chancellor Schröder's Social Democratic Party (SPD) an extra seat in the parliament, and, as a result, the mandate to form the new government. And a few thousand votes more for the Bündnis candidate in that Dresden district, Katarzyna Kruczkowski, will make an even bigger difference.

"The Bündnis vote total, resulting from this campaign, will be a clear signal to Germany and the rest of the world, that there is a faction willing to go for a New Bretton Woods," Zepp-LaRouche said on Sept. 13. "And hopefully, if there is to be a decisive change coming from the United States, we need that signal to be very, very loud and clear, so that, no matter who the next government is, this policy will influence the situation."

Bündnis Issues 'Election Appeal'

On Sept. 9, Zepp-LaRouche had issued her latest "Election Appeal" to the German voters, noting, in the headline of her statement, that neo-con Christian Democratic candidate for Chancellor Angela "Merkel's hope [was] lost in the New Orleans flood." Zepp-LaRouche said: "The identity of Germany is at stake. Are we a social state, as anchored in Article 20 of the Basic Law, or will we allow this social state to be shattered with a 'sledge hammer,' as Merkel's nominee for finance minister, Mr. Paul Kirchhof, has threatened to do?"

Will the incoming government be committed to the General Welfare, or will we permit an 'elbow-dictatorship' to determine from above, who is permitted to be rich, and who must be poor and die early? Will we once again be a nation of poets and thinkers, or do we believe in the world of appearance, as dictated to us by the controlled media?

"The Bündnis vote will be judged as an indicator of the national policies of Germany. For it is only our program for a state investment program, which could move Germany forward, and could achieve productive, full employment once again. . . . And since it is absolutely apparent that Federal Chancellor Schröder looks very closely at internal developments in the U.S.A., to gauge how much maneuvering room he has for his policies, the developments in the American Senate, under the leadership of Senator Harry Reid and others,

are a decisive factor for Schröder. And everyone in the Democratic Party knows that it is LaRouche who revived the party after Nov. 2, 2004, and has led it back to the tradition of FDR. And therefore the votes for the Bündnis are much, much more important than perhaps most people assume. For it is only the collaboration of FDR-oriented forces in the U.S.A., and in Germany and Europe, which can overcome the crisis."

The Role of the State

An important, strategic accomplishment of the Bündnis campaign is that it catalyzed an intense debate in Germany about the consequences of the Katrina hurricane disaster, and about the quality of political leadership, in particular. There has been a nationwide circulation of Zepp-LaRouche's Sept. 2 campaign statement (see last week's *EIR*) warning voters that a Merkel-led neo-con government would unleash disasters in Germany similar to those the neo-cons of the Bush Administration have unleashed in the United States. One of the immediate effects of that statement's circulation was that Schröder took up the Katrina issue in his Sept. 4 television debate with Merkel, saying that the U.S. disaster proved that a strong, active state is indispensable for the protection of the citizens and their property. Merkel's weak state model would fail, in such crisis situations, Schröder warned voters. From that point on, the necessity of government response to a crisis, provoked by Katrina, was a leading item of Schröder's campaign, and had an increasing effect on undecided voters, who realized that Merkel was indeed a bad choice.

As soon as Merkel had announced that Paul Kirchhof would be her finance minister, the Bündnis had insisted that putting him at the forefront of the Merkel campaign was a

head-on assault on the principle of the Common Good, and charged that this nomination was a big political scandal. Kirchhof proposed replacing the income tax with a flat tax, which would place a disproportionately higher tax burden on the lower income segment of the population, while benefitting the speculators. Anticipating a Merkel victory, money has been pouring into Germany since the election was called. Hedge funds now hold about a quarter of German company shares, according to Lehman Brothers Holdings, Inc.

Over the past four weeks, Kirchhof has become the most-rejected figure in Germany, and when Schröder attacked him harshly in the Sept. 4, “debate duel” with Merkel, on national television, Merkel’s ratings dropped by 7% in three days, whereas Schröder’s improved by 6%. Following that, a growing number of prominent politicians of Merkel’s CDU, notably the three state governors of Hesse, Lower Saxony, and Baden-Württemberg, called the Kirchhof nomination a “strategic mistake.” And from an executive meeting in Munich of the Christian Social Union (the autonomous Bavarian state section of the Christian Democrats), it was leaked to the press that there had been proposals to dump Kirchhof on the spot, to help Merkel regain 3% of her lost support, in hopes of enabling the CDU-CSU and their preferred coalition partner, the anti-state Free Democrats, to gain an otherwise impossible absolute majority of votes by the last minute of the election. This CSU proposal was evidence of panic and despair, in the face of Merkel’s insistence on keeping Kirchhof in her shadow government. And this panic and despair grew, because the election campaign was not to be over by Sept. 18, because of the two-week delay of voting in the Dresden district.

The BüSo vows to break out of its “small party” status in the delayed Oct. 2 Dresden election, and campaign for its Dresden-I direct candidate Katarzyna Kruczkowski to win the district against the “major” parties. The LaRouche Youth of Germany will be there, to form a strong intervention force of more than 50 activists, to help Kruczkowski defeat the other six candidates.

Because of the very high recognition which the BüSo has built, especially in Saxony and its state capital Dresden, it will be possible to gain the 25% of the vote Kruczkowski needs to get elected to the national parliament. As the candidates of the three “major” parties (the CDU, SPD, and PDS-Left Parties) have been projected to have 20-30% each, every other serious new competitor will automatically and drastically reduce their share. The candidate that succeeds getting 20% or more in this changed campaign constellation, will be the winner, and the BüSo is off to a good start: In the elections for state parliament in Saxony in September 2004, BüSo direct candidates received up to 5% in some districts, and since then, public recognition has increased. Evidence of that increased recognition has led to a continuous, and in most cases, positive coverage of the BüSo’s activities and statements, in the press of Saxony.

Israel Can’t Walk Away From Gaza War Crimes

by Dean Andromidas

The last Israeli troops left the Gaza Strip on Sept. 12, completing Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s evacuation of all Israeli settlements and troops. Sharon announced his unilateral “disengagement plan” from Gaza almost two years ago, and true to his word, the withdrawal has been totally unilateral.

Not only was there a minimal amount of Israeli coordination with the Palestinian National Authority, but no agreements have been signed on important outstanding questions, such as the opening of the Gaza Airport and seaport, which have been closed for the last five years. Israel still controls the border crossings, the air space, and sea coast.

Palestinian President Abu Mazan charged bluntly, “The Gaza Strip is one large prison, and the army’s departure does not change the situation.”

The Egyptian border crossing is the most insane of the arrangements imposed by Israel. Israel has unilaterally closed the crossing at Rafah, a divided city, half of which lies in Egypt and the other half in Gaza. Israel has moved the official crossing point to Karem Shalom, which is on Israeli territory, near where Egypt, Israel, and the Gaza Strip come together.

As soon as the Israelis departed, Palestinians crossed freely into Egypt where they were able to be reunited with family members, in many cases for the first time in ten years. They were also able to buy food and commodities which have been in short supply because of the Israeli siege. Sharon’s government expressed indignation at the failure of Egyptian border guards to fire upon the Palestinians, as Israeli troops would have done.

Warrants vs. Israeli Generals

Meanwhile, retired Israeli Maj. Gen. Doron Almog temporarily cooled his heels at London’s Heathrow Airport on Sept. 11, waiting for an immediate return flight to Israel to avoid an arrest warrant issued by a British court the day before, charging him with war crimes. Almog had been tipped off about the warrant while en route to London earlier that day, and therefore did not officially enter the United Kingdom, in order to avoid being arrested.

Almog, who recently retired from the Israeli Defense Forces, was the former commander of the Southern Command and was therefore responsible for the Gaza Strip. He is accused of war crimes under the Fourth Geneva Convention