

Europe's Future Hangs On BüSo's Campaign

by Rainer Apel

The upcoming national election in Germany, to be held Sept. 18, is by no means merely a national issue: The economic and political situation in Germany, with its 82 million population (the largest in Europe), is decisive for Europe as a whole, and for international relations in general. And, whatever political leadership Germany has, is also important for the United States, because Germany "is the only possible keystone for an effective partnership between the USA and a wider coalition of Europeans," as Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. pointed out in an Aug. 28 statement, headlined, "Europe Hangs by a Shoe-string."

Of the top electoral candidates of political parties, only two candidates for Chancellor, incumbent Gerhard Schröder of the Social Democrats and Helga Zepp-LaRouche of the Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo), are serious candidates in this broader, positive strategic perspective. Zepp-LaRouche, in particular, plays the role of a catalyst for a public debate on the real economic and strategic issues, which normally none of the candidates or parties or the establishment media would discuss openly.

Zepp-LaRouche's active campaign has already had a visible impact. The "Guns of August" warning by Zepp-LaRouche was picked up by Schröder in mid-August, although with a delay of almost three weeks. The other candidates have remained silent on the issue, or have sided with the Bush Administration (like Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer of the Greens, and Angela Merkel of the Christian Democrats). But none of them, not even Schröder, has so far shown any sign of seriously considering a state-run investment program into industry, science, and infrastructure, that has the target of reaching full employment in Germany again. This is what the BüSo's program does: It calls for an investment offensive in the range of 200 billion euros (or, 400 bil-

lion D-marks), annually. Without the continuous intervention by Zepp-LaRouche and the BüSo, the real issues would not be addressed in this election campaign, voters would be left in the dark, and Germany would have no chance to avoid falling into the hands of the neo-con free-market radicals around Merkel.

The outcome of the election hangs by a shoe-string, and that shoe-string is the campaign of Helga Zepp-LaRouche. "Not that she could win the tally at this time," Lyndon LaRouche said in his Aug. 28 statement, "but she, as the only candidate who is putting forward the programmatic perspective on which the fate of much more than Germany itself now depends at the present moment of world crisis, represents the key potential factor, as a programmatic catalyst which might bring Schröder back into the Chancellorship with both the authority and the programmatic perspective for the kind of partnership with a new European outlook on which any competent foreign policy of the USA's own future now depends. On that, the immediate future of an imperilled planet now depends."

Destroy the German Neo-Cons

Although the financial and logistical resources of the BüSo are limited, the campaign, with its contingent of the LaRouche Youth Movement in Europe, is organizing forcefully, with the clear aim of changing the very things that most other people claim cannot be changed. And change begins with a clear language. For example, if one wants to stop the Christian Democratic Union's neo-con candidate Angela Merkel, one has to expose her as a Bush/Cheney-linked neo-con, and an ally of the dangerous "spoon-benders." This is just what was addressed in the Zepp-LaRouche nationally televised election campaign spot, aired Aug. 22, which

reached millions of voters at prime time.

This issue, a main BüSo campaign focus for several weeks, has now been picked up by Schröder's Social Democrats. Michael Mueller, vice chairman of the SPD's group in the national parliament, on Aug. 30 staged a harsh, very outspoken attack on "the German neo-cons around Merkel."

Mueller said that Angela Merkel and her nominee for Finance Minister, Paul Kirchhof, are the "German variant of the same neo-conservative current that Cheney and Wolfowitz represent in the USA, which also was responsible for the Iraq War." The flat tax policy is only used as a pretext by Kirchhof, for pushing a different model of society, Mueller said: "Kirchhof's concept is arch-reactionary . . . He is a market radical who wants the total disassembling of the social security state. His neo-conservative ideology is a break with the past of the [Christian Democratic] Union, which was based on Catholic social ethics."

The Kirchhof 'Sledgehammer'

The Kirchhof issue is a weak flank of the Merkel campaign, and it will be the subject of a new campaign statement by Zepp-LaRouche, to be mass-circulated during the remaining two weeks of the election campaign. Although much applauded by the hardliners among the monetarist editors in the media, Merkel's decision to nominate Kirchhof for her would-be new German government, is adding to her unpopularity. And this keeps her lagging behind the incumbent Chancellor by 7-8%, despite the deep disappointment among voters with Schröder's failed economic and labor-market policies. In Germany's eastern states, Schröder has a 20% lead over Merkel.

Kirchhof's self-proclaimed intention to break down the existing social-security system with a "sledge-hammer" and to eliminate all social and tax benefits with a "chain-saw," has provoked considerable unrest in the country. Especially in the German East, where unemployment is twice as high as in the West and living standards are 30% lower, voters are enraged over Merkel and Kirchhof.

This sentiment can be decisive for the election outcome: In the September 2002 elections, it was the eastern votes that defeated the opposition Christian Democrats (although only by a tiny margin) and kept Chancellor Schröder in office. This puts the eastern state of Saxony in a crucial position. There, the LaRouche Youth Movement interventions into the Monday Rallies last summer [see *EIR* coverage during that period—ed.] contributed to the Merkel/CDU loss of almost one-third of its vote in the Saxon state elections in September. The LaRouche Youth are again present in Saxony in this election campaign with many activists, and their high recognition factor among voters has forced the media here to be more open than in other parts of Germany. After all, BüSo candidates received 2-6% in the Saxony elections last year.

Because Merkel and her CDU face massive resistance among the voters, it should not be impossible, with a hard-



EIRNS/Karsten Werner

German Chancellor candidate Helga Zepp-LaRouche campaigning in Leipzig, Aug. 25. Her leaflet tells voters "The apocalyptic events in the South of the United States should be a warning, 'with a sledgehammer,' to us in Germany, as to what happens when the principle of the General Welfare is crushed and broken, as Angela Merkel's [nominee] Kirchhof promises. . . ."

hitting campaign, to mobilize 3-4 million voters among the 20 million who said that they were undecided or would not vote, three weeks before the elections, to vote against Merkel on Sept. 18. If the SPD adopts an aggressive campaign strategy—like that of the BüSo—Schröder can defeat Merkel and stay Chancellor of Germany during the turbulent weeks and months to be expected after mid-September.

International Finance Votes Merkel

A defeat of Merkel will be important internationally, for it would roll back the ongoing, escalated offensive by hedge funds, private equity funds, and other speculative funds for the final takeover of Germany. The Kirchhof nomination has received much applause from the pro-monetarist media, which are dominated by supporters of the notorious Mont Pelerin Society. Especially revealing are remarks coming from British publications like the *Daily Telegraph*, which is leading the drum-beat for Merkel. On Aug. 24, the *Telegraph* dedicated two articles to its propaganda drive for Merkel. One stated: "The party [CDU] has picked Professor Paul Kirchhof to shape economic policy, signalling a new willingness to reinvent the German economy. A tax revolutionary, known for advocating a top 25% income tax rate, he has promised to take a *sledgehammer* to Germany's corporatist *Rhineland model*."

The other article proclaimed the end of the German social-market economy model, saying: "The days of Deutschland

BüSo Wrote the Book On German Neo-Cons

First to target Germany's neo-conservative movement was the LaRouche Movement, which issued a definitive book-length exposé of this neo-liberal nexus in January 2005. Thousands of these books, entitled *Germany's Neo-Cons: Who Is Out To Destroy the Federal Social State?*, have circulated.

As lead author Elke Fimmen said in an interview with *EIR* in May, the book demonstrates the close connection between the German neo-cons who want to topple the Schröder government, and the neo-con crowd in the United States. Both are shown to be the tools of international synarchist financial interests, the same interests that created fascism in the 1930s, and are out to do so again, this time on a global scale. The book names the names of the key

players, including Hans Tietmeyer and Meinhard Miegel, and identifies their "reforms" as a new phase of economic looting.

Over the summer, leading Social Democratic Party spokesmen, such as party chief Franz Münterfering, implicitly followed the BüSo's lead by launching an attack on the speculative financial interests (the "locusts") who were buying up and destroying Germany's economy. Finally, at the end of August, an SPD spokesman attacked Germany's neo-cons by name. The question is: Did they act in time?—*Nancy Spannaus*



AG, the traditional network of cross-shareholdings and shared non-executive directorships among the country's corporations established after the Second World War, are over. The ousting of Werner Seifert, the chief executive of Deutsche Boerse, the German stock-exchange operator, by overseas hedge funds earlier this year, was seen by many people as a wake-up call to German business that the old rules no longer apply." The old rules, the article also stated, include labor co-determination in companies.

The *Telegraph* article continued: "Instead of being controlled by generally supportive domestic funds, Germany's blue-chips are now increasingly owned by more aggressive British and American investors. From holding nothing in 1990 [the year of German reunification—ed.], non-Germans now control an average of more than 50% of the free float in the 30 companies that make up the DAX 30, Germany's blue-chip index. Deutschland AG is no longer owned by Deutschland AG. It's owned by the Fidelitys of the world—and they don't stand for this stuff."

In other words: with Merkel and her team in power, the German government would no longer be in control of Germany, which would be transformed into a huge bridgehead for new global speculative attacks on the financial markets.

Broad International Stakes

The additional international stakes in the Sept. 18 elections can be seen by the announcement of Russian President Vladimir Putin that he will visit Germany prior to the election. Putin will meet Chancellor Schröder in Berlin on Sept. 8.

There are reports, so far unconfirmed, that Putin and Schröder will announce a "Joint Peace Initiative" vis-à-vis the Iran crisis. Both Schröder and Putin have publicly warned against a military strike against Iran, and have insisted that the question of Iran's nuclear program must be resolved through "patient diplomacy."

What is known about their meeting, is that a German-Russian energy cooperation agreement will be signed in Berlin, centered on building a 1,800-kilometer natural-gas pipeline from St. Petersburg to Greifswald. Costs for the underwater pipeline across the Baltic Sea are estimated at 4.5 billion euro, and construction will start this year, to be completed in 2010. Germany's share in Russian gas exports stands at 37%.

Chancellor Schröder's policy toward cooperation with Russia contrasts strongly with the outlook being expressed by his neo-con opponents, who have put a priority on good relations with Bush's Washington.

A Decisive Vote

German voters have to recognize that they have it in their hands to decide what Germany's fate will be, on election day. Chancellor Schröder is openly counting on the "independent" and uncommitted vote, as representing his potential for victory. The Merkel crew is openly relying on the "business" and financial community.

But the one uncompromising political force that voters can rely upon, to tell them what the real choices are, is the BüSo, and its candidate for Chancellor, Helga Zepp-LaRouche.