

German Moves Against Iraq War Intensify

by Rainer Apel

It comes late, but the vast majority of the German nation hopes it will not be too late: an unprecedented escalation of the Schröder government's diplomatic moves to stop a war on Iraq. This latest offensive for a peaceful solution began with an op-ed written by Wolfgang Ischinger, Germany's ambassador to the United States, for the Jan. 17 *Washington Post*. In his article, which also received wide attention in Europe and internationally, Ischinger wrote that "the single new strategic challenge for the West in the decade ahead, will be how to shape its relationship with the greater Middle East—the vast region between the Mediterranean and the Indian subcontinent. It is a challenge that includes the issues of terrorism and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. As continuing transatlantic friction over war against Iraq demonstrates, the West has not yet developed a comprehensive political strategy toward this important region. Elements of such a strategy exist, but there is a lack of clarity about our priorities

and objectives.

"While few doubt that a war against Iraq would be won," Ischinger wrote, "many Europeans are deeply concerned that we might in the process lose two larger wars: the one on terrorism and the battle for the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions of Arabs and Muslims. This is one of the reasons why many in Europe continue to oppose a war against Iraq at this time."

'West Might Be In Trouble'

The German ambassador then sketched the following specific elements of a comprehensive Western strategy:

- A transatlantic commitment not only to a *road map* for peace in the Middle East, but also to its implementation. The role of the "quartet"—the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and Russia—in promoting that, is emphasized by Ischinger;
- A continued commitment to fight international terrorism and to provide a prospect of stability and prosperity for Afghanistan, with peacekeeping and reconstruction being vital elements;
- A consolidated Western strategy on Iran, which the Europeans think should consist of working with Iranian President Mohamad Khatami;
- A strengthened non-proliferation strategy, which includes efforts to have arms control agreements—not only on Iraq, but on India and Pakistan, and a number of other countries;
- An intensified dialogue between the West and countries



Germany's mobilization to prevent war in the Mideast is reaching into its streets as Feb. 2 state elections approach; the governing Social Democrats are campaigning on "No" to war, as Helga Zepp-LaRouche's BüSo have for months. Here, BüSo candidate Alexander Hartmann in Hesse.

in the extended Mideast region, to help prevent a Clash of Civilizations.

“The West should clarify its priorities,” Ischinger wrote. “We need to clarify whether, as some in Washington are suggesting, we intend to pursue a *Wilsonian project for reshaping the whole Middle East* . . . and whether—as many in Europe doubt—the West would have the resolve and stamina to sustain it. Transatlantic friction can best be avoided if we operate on the basis of a shared vision. If we don’t start a serious effort to define a more coherent long-term strategy toward

that region, the West might be in trouble—and so might the greater Middle East.”

Appealing to American Opposition

The fact that Ischinger’s “boss,” German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, made similar remarks, the same Jan. 17, in an interview with the German *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* daily, showed that a special mobilization of Germany’s diplomacy was on. That mobilization is coordinated with France, which chairs the United Nations Security Council for

The Elysée Treaty Is A New Opportunity

This statement by Helga Zepp-LaRouche was circulated by her Civil Rights Movement Solidarity (BüSo) party in Germany, and the allied Solidarité et Progrès party in France, in observances of the 40th anniversary of the Franco-German Elysée Treaty.

On the 22nd of January the German-French friendship treaty reaches its 40th year. This Elysée Treaty, which German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles de Gaulle concluded in 1963 as the foundation for a common foreign policy, can also play a decisive role today in overcoming the crisis. If France and Germany act together for the development of modern infrastructure, in the framework of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, Italy will no doubt join this engine of development, as well as the rest of the European continent.

If France and Germany jointly agree on the necessity of suspending the Maastricht Treaty and the Stability Pact because of the crisis, that is precisely what will occur, and Italy and the other countries will follow. Already the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, has labelled the Maastricht Treaty “stupid.” And if France and Germany want to rediscover their identities as industrial nations and the efficiency that has just been demonstrated by the Chinese in Shanghai, then we must, along with France, put on ice the enormous thicket of ecological laws, regulations, and bureaucratic licensing procedures.

If Germany and France jointly agree, as part of the 40-year anniversary of the Elysée Treaty, this tangle of ecological laws, the financial market liberalization of the last 35 years, and the monetarist, growth-strangling strait-jacket of Maastricht, can be abruptly set aside due to the crisis. When the crisis has been overcome, but only then, can we judge anew the logic, or illogic, of these regulations.



The French President and German Chancellor before the relief plaque commemorating Charles de Gaulle and Konrad Adenauer, who signed the Elysée Treaty on Jan. 22, 1962, establishing the French-German postwar friendship.

Old friendships, like those which were established by Adenauer and de Gaulle between Germany and France, often, over longer intervals, express their significance in small, overlooked areas, such as youth exchanges, language promotions, and so forth. But many times these friendships are confronted with the challenge to overcome, jointly, greater problems. That is exactly the case today, when France, in January, and Germany, in February, take over the chairmanship of the UN Security Council—the two months during which it will be determined whether the war against Iraq will be stopped. But such a common great challenge, as well, is infrastructural and economic integration as Eurasia’s security policy.

Therefore, let’s seize the moment! We need a national debate in Germany about these questions which will decide our future, but also in France. An extraordinary opportunity for such a broad public discussion is the state election campaigns in Hesse and Lower Saxony, because only when voters are fully aware of these questions on which, ultimately, the fate of Europe hangs, can you make the right decision.

January—to be followed by Germany as chairman for the crucial month of February. Most experts concur that if the war on Iraq does not start before March, things will turn very problematic for the war-hawks, not only because of the climatic conditions in the region, but also because of increasing global opposition—and resistance also increasing visibly in the States itself. It is that latter, U.S.-based opposition that Ambassador Ischinger wished to address.

The next big move in that diplomatic offensive was Fischer's speech at the Jan. 20 session of the UN Security Council in New York. Fischer said that "rash reactions" to terrorism must be avoided, because they would lead into the kind of Clash of Civilizations the terrorists want to provoke. Germany, he said, opposes an invasion of Iraq because of the "disastrous consequences for regional stability" and "possible negative repercussions on the alliance against terrorism." Conflicts like the one with Iraq require responses based on international law and legitimized by the UN. Fischer stressed that German diplomacy gives great importance to the "dialogue with other civilizations, especially the world of Islam." He told German media, from New York, that the potentials of diplomacy are not at all exhausted, and that when inspections in Iraq have reached an unprecedented intensity, he could not understand discussion of military steps as "unavoidable."

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder himself made the next move in this offensive, stating for the first time, during an election campaign event of his Social Democrats in Goslar on Jan. 21, that he definitely ruled out Germany's voting for war on Iraq: "Don't expect Germany to approve a resolution legitimizing war, don't expect that. Our *no* to war has been firm, and it stays firm." And in an article published by the *Berliner Zeitung* on Jan. 22, Schröder wrote that one "can count on the governments of Germany and France to join forces to preserve peace, avoid war, and ensure people's security."

Schröder's Social Democrats are engaged in campaigns for the Feb. 2 election of state parliaments in Hesse and Lower-Saxony, and they have begun to put up campaign posters saying "No to War!" This is a pale reflection of the many months' campaign waged by Helga Zepp-LaRouche's BüSo party, in last September's national elections and in these state races; Zepp-LaRouche's slogan is: "Financial crash and threat of war—I know what to do."

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