

Buildup of Germany's 'Monday Demonstrations'

June 27, 2004: The Social Democratic Party (SPD) of Chancellor Schröder suffered heavy losses in municipal elections in Thuringia (varying from 24.4-15.6%).

The BüSo party, headed by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, announced plans to intervene in Sept. 19 state elections in Saxony, bolstered by some 50 LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) organizers from all over Europe.

July 1: The SPD government and party leadership declared full commitment to the Hartz IV legislation, the deepest austerity cuts since the foundation of the Federal Republic in 1949. The only historical precedent for such cuts were the measures implemented in the 1920s and 1930s by German Reichsbank president Hjalmar Schacht, Hitler's financier.

July 2: Berlin parliament voted for Hartz IV measures. Hartz IV threatens to lower living standards of up to 4.5 million Germans and their families—2.3 million long-term unemployed and 2.2 million welfare recipients. This includes 1.5 million children and youth.

July 4: Zepp-LaRouche issued the first leaflet for the Saxony intervention: "This time, the change will come from Saxony! *In Sachsen muss die Wirtschaft wachsen!* ["The economy must grow in Saxony"]. The state elections in Saxony can and must become the strategic change of direction in economic policies, not only for Germany, but for the whole of Europe! . . . Because the EU policy with its Stability Pact and Treaty of Maastricht, and the Hartz IV policy of the Berlin government, fully supported by the opposition, is economically insane and criminal in social terms." The leaflet called for full productive employment, through implementation of the Eurasian Land-Bridge program. Zepp-LaRouche called for a revival of the historic "Monday demonstrations." BüSo demos were announced for every Monday, in Leipzig. A first run of 100,000 copies of the leaflets was circulated, followed by 200,000 copies during the month of August.

July 6: The latest jobless figures for Saxony were 385,482 for the month of June, or 17.4%. Of these, 180,294 were long-term unemployed. About half of the Saxonian construction workers were without a job. Despite official statistics, real joblessness in Saxony was already above 20%.

July 8: Panic was reported among the Saxonian Christian Democratic Union (CDU), about losing the state elections on Sept. 19. The CDU announced a debt-cancellation program for Saxonian municipalities, in the range of 200 million euros, which allowed municipalities to drop infrastructure investments in favor of welfare payments.

Saxonian media reported that 80 million euros less will be spent on hospital construction, 50 million less for schools, 35 million less for road construction and maintenance. Additional cuts on the state level were expected to be around 300 million euros, resulting in the firing of 8,000 public servants.

July 13: The Court of Justice of the European Commission in Luxemburg decided that an earlier decision by the French and German finance ministers to overrule the Maastricht rules limiting annual budget deficits to 3% of GNP cannot be allowed. Monetarist spokesmen feared undermining of the Maastricht Stability Pact.

July 14: In a nationally televised address, French President Jacques Chirac attacked the Stability Pact as "too brutal," and charged that the European Central Bank had an "obsession" with price stability.

July 14: *Neue Solidarität*, the weekly of the LaRouche movement in Germany, published a leaflet by Zepp-LaRouche, which included a proposal to "create millions of jobs through infrastructure development, using the Eurasian Land-Bridge as the motor of a worldwide recovery." The paper's headline read: "We Want a New Deal for Europe—No to Hartz IV."

Mid-July: Saxony Governor Georg Milbradt (CDU) reportedly met Milton Friedman in California.

July 15: BüSo in Saxony filed a state-wide slate of 26 candidates, plus 21 direct candidates in local districts.

July 19: 25 demonstrators joined the 45 LYM organizers in a march in Leipzig.

July 26: Some 160 demonstrators were in the BüSo march in Dresden.

July 28: The Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) of Saxony failed to file several candidates, including in two Leipzig districts, for the Sept. 19 state elections. The Leipzig PDS leadership had earlier claimed that no Monday demonstrations should be held in August, because of vacations. In the last Saxony elections, the PDS was the second biggest party in the state.

Aug. 2: 350 people joined the BüSo demonstration in Leipzig, and more than 5,000 demonstrated in Magdeburg (Saxony-Anhalt), 1,500 in Dessau, several hundred in Erfurt, Suhl, Nordhausen, Dresden, Senftenberg, Köthen. Demonstrations were announced for the following week in Gera, Jena, Pössa, Schwerin, Neubrandenburg, Spremberg, Finsterwalde, and Lauchhammer. These demonstrations were organized by several organizations, including the trade unions, the PDS, jobless workers' initiatives, social organizations, and church circles.

Aug. 4: The German internet news site of Yahoo wrote: "Meanwhile, the Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität (BüSo) thinks in global and even cosmic perspectives. With the development of the 'Eurasian Land-Bridge,' the party designs an east-west concept, whereas the proposal that there should be longterm German participation in space travel project, points from Earth to outer space."

Aug. 5: Christian Führer, priest at the Leipzig Nikolai Church, where the initial demonstrations had started in 1989, told *Berliner Zeitung* that new Monday rallies “make a lot of sense, as people feel powerless against the drastic social build-down. . . . We need a second part of the peaceful revolution, to restore the inner peace in Germany.” Other veterans from the 1989 demonstrations call for new Monday demonstrations as well.

German Economics Minister Wolfgang Clement attacked Monday demonstrators in an interview with national radio Deutschlandfunk.

Aug. 5-7: The issue of the Monday demonstrations became the center of controversy among politicians. Representatives of the Greens denounced the demonstrations. Dieter Hundt, president of entrepreneurs’ association BDA, supported Clement. Wolfgang Thierse, President of the Parliament in Berlin, defended the demonstrations, stating that “the sense of justice is stronger among easterners than among westerners,” and people in eastern Germany “have made the experience with peaceful mass protests, when they overthrew the G.D.R. [former communist] regime.” German President Horst Köhler called for cautious introduction of the Hartz IV program, “without unnecessarily provoking people’s fears.”

Aug. 8: BüSo published a program for economic reconstruction of eastern Germany: “This way, the economy in Saxony can grow!”

LYM organizers confronted Saxony Governor Milbradt in a televised debate. Milbradt played down the demonstrations.

Joachim Gauck, director of the state agency for the storage of files of the former East German Ministry of State Security, called the new Monday demonstrations a “wrong idea.” Gauck is closely linked to Council of Cultural Freedom networks in Germany.

Aug. 9: Zepp-LaRouche issued a leaflet denouncing Clement and calling for nationwide demonstrations. There were BüSo Monday demonstrations in Leipzig (8,000), Magdeburg (12,000), and at least 31 other cities.

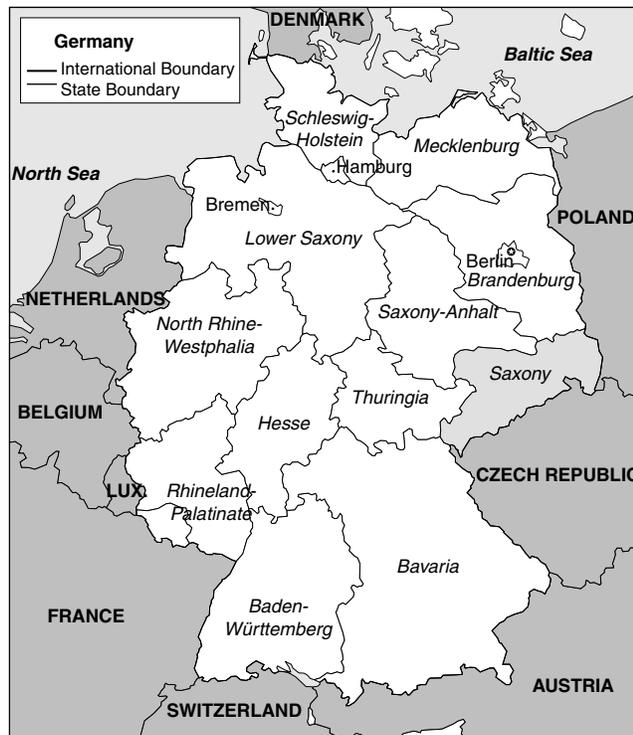
Saxony Governor Milbradt stated to Deutschlandfunk that “we would, if we were invited, consider taking part” in demonstrations. Zepp-LaRouche invited Milbradt to address the BüSo rally in Leipzig (he didn’t).

Oskar Lafontaine, former SPD chairman, stated in a *Der Spiegel* interview that “things do not work anymore with Schröder.”

Aug. 10: The *Rheinische Post* reported on the Monday demonstrations in eastern Germany, including BüSo’s role in Leipzig, and mentioned Zepp-LaRouche.

Märkische Oder-Zeitung in Frankfurt/Oder reported that “about 500 citizens followed the invitation by the Bürgerrechtsbewegung Solidarität” in Leipzig.

The leipzigfoto.com internet site offered two pictures of BüSo/LYM organizers singing at the Leipzig rallies. The caption reads: “. . . so far, they are not very prominent yet, but



that can change rather rapidly! The Bürgerrechtsbewegung, BüSo, touches the nerve of the nation . . . they stand for a new spirit of solidarity in the tradition of the common good.”

Aug. 11: Chancellor Schröder called an emergency meeting in Berlin, to review the Hartz IV package in the face of the massive protests against it. Invited were the ministers of economics and finance, Wolfgang Clement and Hans Eichel, the head of the Chancellor’s office Frank Walter Steinmeier, and Franz Müntefering, national chairman of the SPD.

The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported BüSo’s programmatic orientation in the Monday demonstration in Leipzig.

The *New York Times* ran a vicious attack on the people of eastern Germany, as being communist holdovers.

Aug. 11: The *Berliner Tagesspiegel* reported on the Leipzig demonstration.

Andreas Ehrhold, initiator of the first Magdeburg Monday demonstration three weeks before, said “the protests will be continued until Hartz IV is replaced by a policy which creates new jobs.” More demonstrations were announced for Erfurt, Zittau, and Chemnitz, and also in the northern state of Mecklenburg-Prepomerania, in the cities of Greifswald and Stralsund.

Mid-August 2004: German Monday demonstrations inspired forces internationally. Members of the Solidarité et Progrés party in France, sister party of BüSo, started demonstrations in the French sister cities of eastern German communities.

Aug. 16: BüSo demonstration in Leipzig, and demonstra-

tions in about 120 other cities, brought out more than 100,000 demonstrators in total. The biggest demonstrations, in Leipzig and Magdeburg, had 15,000 each; Rostock, Halle, and Dessau had 4-5,000 each.

Aug. 17: Preceding Chancellor Schröder's traditional press conference the next day, Zepp-LaRouche published "Manifesto for the Monday Demonstrations" (see preceding article).

BüSo organized a demonstration in Görlitz, with 200 marchers.

Figaro Economie in France had a full-page article on the Monday demonstrations in Germany, noting that the reforms had "numerous points in common with those initiated in France."

The day before Schröder's press conference, funds and rating agencies threatened to downgrade German government debt to "sovereign junk," unless more social cuts were implemented. Andrew Bosomworth, Vice-President of Pimco (the largest bond-trading fund in the world, since becoming acquired a few years by Munich-based insurer Allianz) demanded that Germany undertake "a number of crucial reforms, mostly in the labor market, tax, and social welfare systems." In Pimco's latest Europe Watch report, Bosomworth claimed that all Germany's economic problems, including its unemployment, originated from its "unsustainable social welfare system" and the failure by the political class to drastically slash Germany's labor and social welfare system.

Aug. 18: Chancellor Schröder held the traditional Summer press conference in Berlin, the half-term review of his government's achievements. He stressed his commitment to the Hartz IV package, to be pushed through now, "without any changes." He attacked the CDU and the PDS for misusing the Monday demonstrations for the formation of an "alliance of obstructionism" against Hartz IV, and he attacked "extremists from all sides" for trying to benefit from the protests. Schröder praised the leadership of the national labor federation DGB for not joining the Monday rallies.

In response to Schröder's address in Berlin, Lyndon H. LaRouche issued a statement: "Schröder in a Bind: The World Monetary System has Cracked in Germany Today!"

Regional DGB leaders in eastern Germany supported the protests.

Sächsische Zeitung in Görlitz covered the demonstrations, quoting the BüSo slogan "In Saxony, the economy must grow," and mentioned the singing by the LYM demonstrators of the "Ode to the Joy" and other songs, some with ironic texts on the present situation. *Vogtland Anzeiger* announced the BüSo demonstration in Plauen and quoted the BüSo leaflet.

Eastern German media reported growing opposition in the CDU ranks, to party chairwoman Angela Merkel's support for Hartz IV, with an increasing number of CDU members joining the demonstrations. Wolfgang Böhmer, Gover-

nor of the state of Saxe-Anhalt, indicated problems with having a serious debate on the genuine problems and interests of eastern Germany with his CDU governor colleagues from western states.

Aug. 19: More demonstrations took place, in Erfurt (Thuringia) with 4,000 citizens; in Neubrandenburg (Mecklenburg-Premomerania) with at least 3,000 people; 2,000 in Stralsund; and 1,000 in Greifswald.

In a *Die Welt* interview, CDU Chairwoman Merkel stated full support for the Hartz IV measures, adding that Schröder should go beyond Hartz IV, with deeper cuts.

Hamburg Mayor Ole von Beust (CDU) told CDU critics of the Hartz package, to stop supporting the Monday rallies.

Aug. 20: In an interview with *Saarländische Zeitung*, former CDU party manager Heiner Geissler criticized the pro-Hartz IV policy of CDU Chairwoman Merkel. Geissler said that with Hartz IV, an impoverization process will be launched resembling the situation in the United States. He said the CDU should never have voted for the Hartz IV package.

Aug. 21: A Monday demonstration was announced for Vienna, Austria, by an alliance of largely left-wing organizations, labor unions, and Social Democrats.

Aug. 23: Monday demonstrations took place in 110 German cities, with 70,000 demonstrators reported officially (*EIR* estimated about 100,000). In Leipzig, BüSo/LYM organizers joined the big demonstration, carrying banners demanding "jobs for 8 million people."

BüSo representatives were invited to address demonstrations in Königswusterhausen and in Potsdam (state of Brandenburg).

L'Humanité, the newspaper of the French Communist Party, stated that "Germany is living a hot social Autumn," and added that the German protest movement could be of historical dimensions: "If it continues to grow, it could have the effect of an earthquake which will not leave the political world untouched."

Aug. 24: Chancellor Schröder opened the SPD election campaign in Saxony, was booed in Wittenberg, and eggs were thrown by protesters. In Leipzig, BüSo/LYM organizers intervened into a public event with Schröder, singing "Kanzler Schröder, schläfst du noch?" ("Chancellor Schröder, are you still asleep?"), to the tune of "Frère Jacques." The intervention was filmed by various media.

The French daily *Le Monde* reported on the Aug. 23 demonstrations in Germany.

Aug. 25: German news agency DDP mentioned the BüSo singing intervention at the Leipzig Schröder meeting. Spiegel-online reported that "a group of students was singing "Kanzler Schröder, schläfst du noch?"

Aug. 26: The *Wall Street Journal* covered the Monday demonstrations in Germany: "The likely upshot: An end to further economic restructuring until national elections in two years. . . . That could be bad news for the world economy."