

EAP defines issues in German election

by Susan Welsh

The European Labor Party (EAP) in West Germany announced Jan. 27 that it qualified for national ballot status in the upcoming March 6 federal elections, and will be fielding candidates in each of the 10 federal states. A total of 53 candidates will run on the EAP ticket, with full access to the television time guaranteed to national political parties.

The EAP was founded in 1974 by associates of the world's leading American System economist, Lyndon H. LaRouche, to build a constituency for the New World Economic Order in West Germany and other European nations. The recent official adoption of the fascist, anti-technology policies of the Green Party by the Social Democratic Party (SPD), makes the EAP the only political organization in West Germany committed to reversing the depression and the consequent danger of emergency government and war.

EAP chairman Helga Zepp-LaRouche, wife of Lyndon LaRouche, is running for national parliament in the once-booming steel center of Dortmund in the Ruhr region. Dortmund has been the scene of a years-long fight between the "de-industrializers" who want to close down the steel plants and replace them with casino gambling, electronics, and so forth, and the city's working population, which has staged 15,000-person demonstrations in the past year to save the steel industry.

Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche toured a Hoesch steel plant and gave her first campaign speech in Dortmund at an EAP election rally Jan. 28, where an encouraging number of campaign workers was signed up. She insisted to the voters that there can be no solution for Dortmund within the city limits, and that only by joining the EAP's international fight for a New World Economic Order, providing credit for large-scale investment in both the Third World and the advanced sector, can industry be saved.

Mrs. LaRouche's opponent is Christian Democratic Labor Minister Norbert Blüm, a "solidarist" whose first move as minister was to demand a six-month wage freeze. Two days before Zepp-LaRouche's campaign appearance, a commission appointed by federal Economics Minister Count Otto von Lambsdorff had issued a report recommending a contraction and cartelization of the steel industry, with thousands of additional layoffs.

The plans to cartelize German industry, Mrs. LaRouche said in her Dortmund speech, are nothing but a revival of the Morgenthau Plan, the program for the de-industrialization and depopulation of Germany drafted in the concluding months of World War II by Winston Churchill's advisers. The new plan is designed to slash the steel workforce and reduce national steel-producing capacity by at least 20 million tons. (Peak capacity about a decade ago was a little over 60 million tons per year.) The existing five companies will be rationalized or merged into two firms, the "Rhine Group" and the "Ruhr Group," which will be forced to cut "superfluous capacity" in broad-plate rolling mills. Dortmund's Hoesch Steel had planned to build a new oxygen furnace to modernize its facilities; now it will not only be prevented from doing this, but it will lose the old plant. As one Hoesch shop steward told Mrs. Zepp-LaRouche, "We will have to get rid of 10,000 skilled steel workers. We now have 16,000; in 1980 we had 26,000; so that in about another three years we will be down to 4-5,000, under the new plan."

In the Saar region, the Arbed Saarstahl company, Europe's most modern, providing 20 percent of the jobs in the state, will be "left to solve its problems by itself;" in a few years, after being "totally restructured," the commission recommends that it might join one of the new cartels.

With the exception of the EAP, the election campaigns are being run as a fight between "left-wing" and "right-wing" options for demolishing German industry. The left option, led by SPD Chancellor candidate Hans-Jochen Vogel, calls for international "labor solidarity" against advanced technology, on the basis that new technologies eliminate technology jobs. This policy was put together for Vogel by C. Fred Bergsten's International Institute for Economics in Washington, D.C., and by the Anglo-German Foundation for Studies of Industrial Society, the British complement to the American Marshall Fund. The president of the Anglo-German Foundation is Prince Philip of Great Britain.

The EAP is trying to shock the population into recognizing the choice it faces: either it sticks with familiar political institutions which have nothing to offer at this point, or it gives the EAP enough voter support to signal the emergence of a movement to restore Germany's classical role on the world stage in advancing industry, science, and culture.

At the Hoesch plant, workers accepted "in theory" the EAP's insistence upon the fight for a New World Economic Order, yet held to their allegiance to the SPD on the grounds that keeping the CDU in power will continue the current economic crisis. The new program adopted by the SPD at its Jan. 21 political platform congress in Dortmund, however, calls for a special "machine tax" on all new factory machinery that might "take away workers' jobs," creation of "new jobs" in nature conservation programs; an emergency program to "save the German forests" from industry; and reducing the work-week and lowering the pension age to spread out whatever jobs now exist. The program makes it clear that the SPD will pull West Germany into a post-industrial dark age.