

## Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

### A 'depression' vote

*A strong farmer-labor protest vote was recorded in Baden-Württemberg state elections.*

Those in the political establishment of Germany who believed that massive "recovery" propaganda would help to make voters forget the Black Monday crash of October 1987, were proven wrong by the results of the state elections in Baden-Württemberg on March 20. All four parliamentary parties (Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Greens, and Free Democrats) lost votes.

State Minister-President Lothar Späth (CDU), who slyly shifted toward attacks on "them in Bonn" in the last days of the campaign, only "won" reelection because none of the other parties broke the pattern of vote losses.

Votes were lost because an increasing section of the working population feels the effects of the economic depression. Späth's CDU suffered a drain of 5-10% in the farming belts, where the European Commission's quotas on food production, as well as farm indebtedness and excessive conservation laws, have caused a dramatic drop in farmer income. Späth's refusal to act to save farmers from bankruptcy, and his alliance with the policy of the Bonn government to "phase out" state subsidies made his CDU unpopular.

Whom did the traditionally conservative constituency of the farmers turn to? Political disorientation drove many farmers to vote for the two neo-Nazi protest parties, the NPD and REP. But a considerable percentage voted for the Patriots for Germany, whose program, based on the LaRouche method, drew "broader response in the rural districts," as the state's farmers association observed.

Significant breakthroughs for the Patriots, running for the first time and scoring only 0.1% statewide, occurred where farmers themselves, with high local recognition, were the candidates. In District 23, Main Tauber Kreis, Patriot candidate Stefan Blasauer scored 17.3% in his home village Paimar. In the district around Gruensfeld, he achieved a total of 3.8%. In both cases, he scored third after the CDU and the Social Democrats, leaving the Liberals and the Greens behind.

Alfons Haas, another farmer who ran in District 64, Ulm, received 9.4% of the vote in Steinfeld, his hometown, and a significant 8% in the general area. Another farmer candidate, Karl Bauer, in Schwäbisch Hall (District 22), scored 3.3%.

These results are the more remarkable in that they were achieved by farmers who joined the Patriots only a few weeks or months before, and who had little in the way of the logistics, funds, and manpower resources possessed by the other parties. The media, which are controlled by the bigger parties, blacked out the Patriots. Like the LaRouche presidential campaign in the United States, the Patriots' candidates concentrated on "grass roots" programmatic organizing, working their way from village to village and farm to farm.

The Patriots earned their votes by targeting the international grain cartel and Soviet grain-trade mafia. Naming these bigger enemies overcame many farmers' deeply rooted skepticism, usually expressed in comments like, "Everybody makes deals with Big Money; nobody takes the big ones on."

Voting for the Patriots was a great step forward for the farmers, therefore, and even the news media, despite their blackout of the Patriots campaign, took notice of the new phenomenon after election day.

On the labor side of the vote, a remarkable development took place: the Social Democrats lost a disproportionate 4.5% in labor districts, their traditional strongholds. This is a direct response to corporatist proposals for a wage-freeze by the SPD leadership.

Part of the SPD's losses were due to the desertion of voters in the "information society" professions, who considered technocrat Lothar Späth a more promising choice. Späth won't be able to keep his promises for a "high-tech boom," however, because he doesn't have a program to halt the deepening economic depression, which is already reaching the computer and electronics sectors of the German economy. Labor voters in the machine-building sector, which has suffered severely from the collapse of export markets in the West, still hope that Lothar Späth's deals with the Soviet Union may yield profitable contracts and secure jobs. As his trip to Moscow in February showed, however, the Soviets want machines but don't want to pay for them.

Voters in high-tech professions will be forced to recognize soon that only the LaRouche program for a massive effort to place a colony on Mars over the next 40 years, a program adopted by the Patriots, can secure their future.

Since Lothar Späth is out to topple Chancellor Kohl in Bonn, preferably over economic issues like another "crash," there may be national elections in Germany, very soon. Those who deserted from the SPD to the CDU now, will have to consider the Patriots in the next elections.