

Germany shifts policy, will build new national transport grid

by Hartmut Cramer

The German government, at the beginning of April, announced that it will dramatically expand and speed up its rebuilding of the rotten transportation infrastructure left by the communist regime which was swept out of power in 1989 in eastern Germany.

Reflecting the massive pressure of unemployment in eastern Germany, and the effect of nationwide organizing for Lyndon LaRouche's proposed "Paris-Berlin-Vienna Productive Triangle," the German government is shifting policy toward large-scale "internal improvements" to increase the nation's productivity, rather than imposing "free market" ideology on regions wrecked by 40 years of communism.

Severely hampered by the Anglo-American demands in the Persian Gulf war, which abruptly diverted much-needed energies (and funds) from the task of rebuilding Eastern Europe, the German government for more than half a year had taken a low profile in the reconstruction of eastern Germany and Europe. Before the Gulf war, this task was recognized almost everywhere as being the "challenge of the century." Fortunately, there are signs now that the priorities are being set right again, and that Bonn will use high-technology infrastructure building to bring about another economic "miracle."

Part of European-wide grid

The government will dramatically speed up construction of 17 key East-West high-speed rail and highway routes, spending about DM 56 billion (about \$35 billion) over five to seven years in a nation with one-third the population and less than one-tenth the area of the United States. The most important urban and industrial areas in both parts of Germany will be efficiently reconnected again. And the political significance goes beyond this.

Günther Krause, Germany's new minister of transportation, in his announcement, said that:

- These projects in Germany are part of the soon-to-be-built *Europeanwide* transportation grid, linking the entirety of Western Europe to the newly liberated countries in Eastern Europe.

- All other projects to build new transportation infrastructure in Germany are likely to be sped up as well. *By law*, the planning and building time for rail, road, and canal projects will be cut in half.

New laws to speed projects

Bonn is about to create a new legal instrument, the "measures law." In principle, this law, a sort of emergency law, has already been approved by the government, and is now being finalized by the Transportation Ministry; with it, the construction of highways and railway lines can be completed in five to seven years.

Actual construction of the first infrastructure projects will begin before the end of the year. In fact, Krause announced April 16 in an interview with the German tabloid *Bild-Zeitung* that earthmoving for the new "Baltic Highway," stretching along the Baltic coast from the north German city of Lübeck across the Polish border to Szczecin will begin this fall.

But, in order to put the fast infrastructure building in Germany on a firm basis, the Bonn government in addition decided on a "speed-up law." Once this law is passed (probably this summer), petitions against big projects will be heard only before the highest administrative court in Germany, and not by a series of courts on lower levels. So, concerned citizens, who have a constitutional right to appeal (and, if their case is reasonable, to force a change in the plans), still have the opportunity of doing so, but not of conducting economic sabotage. Projects now possible will include construction of nuclear power plants, especially replacing the old and deadly dangerous Russian "Chernobyl-type" reactors; and a large international airport south of Berlin.

With these measures, the German government is about to end the big "investment jam," which has considerably crippled the German economy for the last 20 years, since the Club of Rome and other malthusian organizations began openly to campaign for strangling technological development with the aim of undermining, and eventually destroying, successful economies like Germany's, from within.

Maglev plans included

Although a final view of the future of German transportation infrastructure will only be seen when the "map" of all the transportation routes comes out at the end of this year, the outlines of the future transportation grid are already visible. Most of the above-mentioned infrastructure projects are railways, connecting the capital of Berlin to the densely

populated urban and industrial centers in west and east Germany. The most important of these railroads—like the one from Berlin west to Hanover and then through the industrial Ruhr region to Cologne, or the southbound Berlin-Leipzig-Nuremberg railroad—will be built as high-speed railways allowing average speeds of 150 miles per hour.

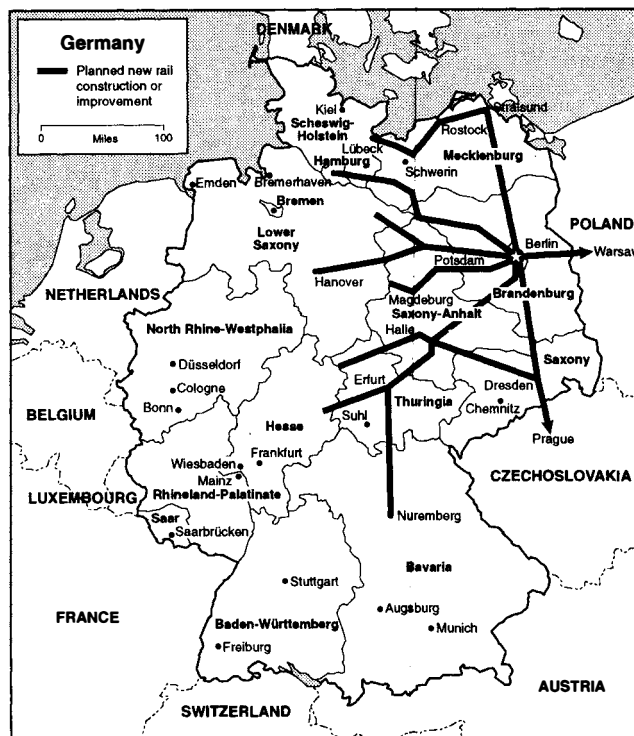
Priority is given to railways, but there is great need for new highways in eastern Germany, as the state of anyone's back attests, who has driven on the old highways there in recent months. Besides the "Baltic highway," six more will be built.

Equally important is the upgrading of the eastern part of the famous Mittellandkanal, an artificial waterway through northern Germany. It stretches from the German-Dutch border in the west, to the German-Polish border in the east, thereby connecting Berlin (and other cities) to Hamburg and the other harbors on the coast, and the industrial areas in Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland.

But most fascinating is the fact that the magnetic levitated train (or "maglev"), whose principles were invented in Germany back in 1932, but which has been developed recently only in Japan, has now been brought to the surface. For years, a super-modern maglev, running at speeds of up to 300 miles an hour, has undergone successful testing on a special track. The maglev is the technological leading edge of LaRouche's Productive Triangle infrastructure plan, now known all over Europe. And, since Josef Duchac, prime minister of the German state of Thuringia, some months ago proposed a maglev from Berlin to Frankfurt via Leipzig and the Thuringian capital of Erfurt, momentum has been increasing for it to be built.

The Transportation Ministry in Bonn has announced that right now feasibility studies are being done to decide by this fall whether the maglev can go into operation. Once this train system is included in the "German transportation map" to be released by the end of the year, there exists an excellent perspective of building up an efficient integrated transportation grid, featuring maglevs, high-speed rails, waterways, and highways for all of Europe, East and West together. And that would mean that LaRouche's Productive Triangle was right on track.

Whoever believes that this is impossible, should simply stop and think. On Nov. 9, 1989, when informed that the Berlin Wall had come down, LaRouche, speaking from his federal prison cell in Rochester, Minnesota, proposed the construction of a "high-speed rail connecting Paris, Berlin, and Warsaw," as the basis for solving the upcoming economic and political problems. A year and a half later, the German Transportation minister announces in an official statement: "The high-speed line Berlin-Hanover is part of the main European transportation axis Paris-Berlin-Warsaw and is international in character. By 1997, this line, which also will be an important part of the European high-speed net, will be realized."



Source: German Transportation Ministry EIRNS/John Sigerson

European tours U.S. for 'Productive Triangle'

Hartmut Cramer, the author of the accompanying article, began a 14-city tour of the United States on April 21 to present Lyndon LaRouche's "Productive Triangle" program for Europe, "the way out" of the U.S. depression.

Cramer said he will present the method proposed by LaRouche for achieving the output required in agriculture, manufacturing, and infrastructure to save the economies of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, the Third World, and the United States.

Cramer said that he wants to "bring people the vision that the world could become prosperous" and end the crimes of hunger and disease from lack of economic development. The U.S. is now being inundated with discussions of "free trade" agreements, which will restrict economic development and further turn the world over to looting by the banks and cartels. He said a similar phenomenon—the Soviet "command" system—has caused the breakdown crisis there. Only a "third way," based on the achievements of the "American system" of political-economy, can work today.