

tween Australia and Indonesia presently divides the area between the offshore shelves of Australia (which extends some 200 kilometers into the Timor Sea) and that of Timor (which drops off sharply), into three zones, A, B, and C, with various degrees of Indonesian and Australian control in each. But, notes the *Review*, were East Timor to become independent, the whole treaty would have to be renegotiated, this time with East Timor, and not Indonesia, controlling the oil. And, as sources at Pertamina told *EIR* already some years ago, although tests had demonstrated huge reserves in Zone C, which is 90% Indonesian-controlled, Pertamina has never been able to develop those reserves because of the unrest in East Timor.

Whipping up Australians

As a result of the Australian government's propaganda, supplemented by the ceaseless pro-independence drum-beating by Australia's Anglophile press barons, multibillionaires Kerry Packer and Rupert Murdoch, many Australians have been whipped into a fever for intervention into East Timor. Rallies around Australia, some numbering 15,000-20,000 people, have called for UN intervention, while Australia's trade union movement has begun a boycott of anything having to do with Indonesia, including air freight and air travel in or out of the country, and postal and phone services to Indonesian businesses and to the Indonesian Embassy in Australia. The Maritime Union of Australia has placed bans on 80,000 tons of wheat bound for Indonesia out of 10 Australian ports. The Australian Council of Trade Unions has called for the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to cut off all assistance to Indonesia.

The sole political force in Australia to speak out forcefully against this madness, akin to that which swept the United States during George Bush's Desert Storm attack against Iraq in 1991, has been Lyndon LaRouche's associates in the Citizens Electoral Council, a federal political party. CEC National Secretary Craig Isherwood told *EIR*, "This is a classic example of what Lyndon LaRouche has denounced as 'morality in the small,' which, actually, is gross *immorality*, because people refuse to look at the big picture: the onrushing global financial collapse, and the Crown's plot to crush nation-states, so that no resistance can be mounted to British imperial rule. *That*, together with a good old-fashioned neocolonialist grab for raw materials, is what is behind this East Timor crisis. One would think that Australians, in particular, might have learned something by now, about fighting and dying in British-provoked wars. After all, this was a *British* UN resolution, and British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook led the charge for this engagement, just as he did in the Balkans, with Alexander Downer bringing up the rear. As for the trade unions, perhaps they should stop hyperventilating for a moment, and ask why they suddenly find themselves in bed with that same Mont Pelerin Society Howard government, which has sworn to destroy them."

Blair's 'Third Way' defeated in Germany

by Rainer Apel

With the defeats in state parliament elections in Saarland and Brandenburg on Sept. 5 having been already sufficiently bitter for Germany's Social Democrats (SPD), the two elections a week later, on Sept. 12, for state parliament in Thuringia and for municipal councils in North Rhine-Westphalia, brought real disaster. In Thuringia, voter turnout dropped by 15% (from 74.8% to 59.8%), and the SPD lost 11% of the votes tallied, as compared to the last elections in 1994. Worse still: The SPD fell behind the post-communist PDS, which outstripped the Social Democrats by a margin of almost 3%. The Christian Democrats (CDU), the SPD's major coalition partner in the state government of Thuringia since 1994, received 51% of the vote and will run the state alone for the next five years.

All in all, the Thuringian SPD, which in 1994 was getting 29.6% of the vote, lost more than one-third of the vote on Sept. 12, and the voter abstention was mostly due to SPD supporters turning their backs on the party.

The disaster was far worse, though, in North Rhine-Westphalia, with its 18 million inhabitants Germany's biggest state, home to 20% of the national electorate. There, after the 1994 elections, 20 of the 23 biggest municipalities were run by SPD mayors, and many of the cities had been solid Social Democratic territory for decades. In the case of Dortmund, SPD rule had lasted for 53 years! On Sunday, Sept. 12, this era came to an end: Seven cities were taken by the Christian Democrats right away, with another seven expected to fall to the CDU in a second round of voting on Sept. 26. The massive loss of SPD votes, which was between 10 and 12% across the board—in some cities even above 14%—was a profound reality shock for the German Social Democrats. An even greater shock was the fact that in many districts, more SPD supporters stayed home from the polls, than went to vote. In the northern districts of Dortmund, traditionally "deep-red" labor voting territory, voter turnout dropped below 30%—the lowest level in the entire postwar period. Apparently, labor voters did not like the SPD and its "modernist" service-sector outlook, borrowed from Tony Blair's "New Labour" and its "Third Way." (Interestingly, British voters seem not to like Blair's "Third Way" much either, recently. On June 13, on the occasion of the elections for the new European Parliament, they handed Blair's party

a big defeat: “New Labour” lost more than half of its seats in the European Parliament.)

An evil omen for the ‘red-green’ coalition

For the SPD of North Rhine-Westphalia, which is scheduled to hold elections for state parliament in May next year, the election results of Sept. 12 are an evil omen: The SPD-led “red-green” coalition will be voted out, and voted out in a landslide, just as the cities fell to the opposition CDU this time. This, at least, is what the CDU hopes will happen next spring. There may also be surprises in store for the CDU next time, because there are shifts occurring in the electorate that have no precedent in the last 50 years of Germany’s postwar existence.

If one looks more closely at the votes cast Sept. 12, one may find that the CDU did not really gain votes, it only came off better (far better) than the SPD, which *lost* 40-50% of its voter support. Many, maybe most, of the voters who turned away in rage from the CDU and the Kohl government in the national elections just a year ago—September 1998—and who voted for the SPD at that time, have not simply returned to the CDU this time. Instead, they decided to vote for neither of the two big parties, neither SPD nor CDU. With a voter turnout of 55% in North Rhine-Westphalia, the country is heading for the time when, whichever party emerges as the winner of elections, will have the actual backing of only 25-30% of the electorate. At a time of profound economic-financial depression, this is a base far too small for any democratic government to be able to take bold decisions of a kind that can overcome the crisis. Moreover, for the SPD, a party that depends on labor votes to be able to govern, because the CDU has its foothold in the middle classes, the events of Sept. 12 pose the question: Who lost labor?

Axel Horstmann, chairman of the Ostwestfalen-Lippe SPD party district of North Rhine-Westphalia, put the answer to that question into plain words Sept. 14: “We need another platform than the Schröder-Blair paper.” The reference is to the paper which Germany’s SPD Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and British Prime Minister Tony Blair jointly presented to the public at a London press conference June 8, in what was meant as a clarion call for the “new Left” in the 21st century. Ever since then, this “Third Way” paper, which runs counter to the most basic positions of the German Social Democracy, has sparked a heated debate inside the SPD—not a profound debate, but one intense enough to alienate the party base from its pro-Blair leadership. SPD supporters may not have the patience to read through all those academic phrases of the Schröder-Blair paper, but they have the capability to smell that “this is not my party.” After all, the advancing of pro-Blair views at the top of the SPD goes along with the proposal for a four-year austerity budget by the Schroeder government, which plans to cut 160 billion deutschemarks from the budget—mostly in the areas of

spending on the social welfare, labor market, and pensions budgets.

This is the reason that longtime SPD voters boycotted the polls in traditional Social Democratic voting districts like those in northern Dortmund, on Sept. 12. No leading Social Democrat will be able to pull them back to the voting booth, unless he denounces the present SPD policy; nor will any of the prominent leftists in the party be able to achieve that. Richard Dewes, SPD state chairman of Thuringia, is such a leftist—he even conducted his campaign with a call for an alliance with the post-communist PDS, with which he wanted to form the government, after the elections of Sept. 12. The SPD constituency was not enthusiastic about this perspective: Shortly before election day, an opinion poll found that 40% of them would rather vote for Bernhard Vogel, the incumbent State Governor and lead candidate of the CDU, than for Dewes.

End of an era

The elections of this autumn mark the end of an era: The SPD cannot return to a better identity and win back votes, because there is no such better identity. Traditional Social Democratic outlooks have been destroyed by the advance of radical ecologism over the last 20 years, at the expense of the formerly close relations between the party and organized labor. The left wing of the party has gone along with this environmentalism consistently, thereby pretty thoroughly discredited itself among labor voters.

The only way out for well-meaning and committed Social Democrats who want to rebuild the alliance with labor is a policy that does address the economic reality of the ongoing depression, that offers a convincing perspective for workers to keep their jobs, and for the highly qualified jobless to get new jobs. The policy that offers such a perspective is there: It is the program of the LaRouche movement, and many SPD members have become familiar with it over the years. The SPD leadership, though, has been able to suppress debate about the LaRouche proposals, with means similar to those employed by leaders of the Democratic Party of the United States, to contain Lyndon LaRouche’s impact there.

The same SPD leadership has been able to pretend, in the past, that its way of practicing politics would always attract a majority of voters: Now, however, that era is over, because that same SPD leadership is driving away more and more voters, with every election. In the wake of the humiliating election defeats, ferment to elect a new leadership is building inside an enraged SPD party base. But the party also needs a new policy; without one, it will be voted out of government, and it will not be able to survive as a decisive power factor in Germany’s political landscape. The expected defeat in the state parliament elections in Saxony on Sept. 19 will underline that, once again.